UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
NOTTINGHAM

Class Mark S/DD 218. H6

Book Number 18145

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

LIBRARY.
History Department.

Presented by

.....

.....

Catalogue No.....

Shelf No.....

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM
60 0256159 8
WITHDRAWN
FROM THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

BISMARCK AT HOME

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/bismarckathome0000jule

BISMARCK

AT HOME

BY

JULES HOCHE

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

THÉRÈSE BATBEDAT

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS FROM ENGRAVINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON: JOHN MACQUEEN
1899

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, NOTTINGHAM.

PREFACE

A BIOGRAPHER, I think, must be endowed with many and various qualities if he is not to fail in his responsible duties. Impartiality, in the first place—that is, the absence of all preconceived feeling against the subject of one's portraiture; sincerity, too, like that of a faithful mirror, which will not make the monkey look like a saint nor the saint like the monkey.

But, over and above all that, the biographer must furnish his readers with a psychological key to his hero's (I had almost said his patient's!) character. He must expound in minute detail the moral character of the man, giving a precise and accurate sketch of him which shall be as luminous as opaque bodies are when traversed by the Röntgen rays. For the deeds of a man, however celebrated, only interest us by reason of the mind and inner cause we discern in them, and by the more or less intricate way in which they show forth, indicate, reflect, the mysterious light and shade of the soul.

In a word, the human type put before us, the being of flesh and blood, covered with clothes, armed with defiance, fortified by the sympathy—or the hatred!—he inspires in his contemporaries,—this type must become not only stiff and hard, but subtle and incorporeal; so that we comprehend it, it must be reduced to a simple expression in physico-psychology, a mental equation worked out in one

or more volumes, the clue to which, however, must be plain to the reader from the very first page.

This theory, I think, must be applied in every biography of importance, and especially in that of Bismarck, whose strange and complex character has caused as many to belittle as admire, who has been so praised and so reviled, that it is difficult to get at a proper opinion of him—unless you possess the psychological key I have been talking of.

Now there are writers who, situated as I am, would begin by pleading their difficulties in approaching the task. But I think I can promise that, in the following study, readers will find two essentials hitherto omitted in all Bismarck's biographies—and these are, in the first place, absolute impartiality, and, in the second place, a strict psychological theory, which explains somewhat clearly, I think, the strange problem put before the world by the puzzling character of the man who for half a century has guided, in a more or less official capacity, the destinies of a large part of Europe.

I was quite a child when the name of Bismarck was first made known to me, not only by fire and sword (*ferro et igne*, according to his own fine formula), but also by the talk of my seniors, some of whom, alas! paid the tribute of a limb or two to the fiery shot which then rained down on poor Strasburg. From morning till evening the shells filled the air in the neighbourhood of our house with a melody so pleasing to my ignorant and music-mad fancy, that I resented the comparison of Bismarck, the indirect cause of my music, to Croquemitaine, Troppmann, and Mephistopheles, the names hurled by the besieged at the master of the German invasion.

A short time after, I found myself in the difficult situation of the man whom the old allegorical picture represents as naked between two suits—one in the fashion of

yesterday, the other in that of to-morrow. Thanks to the treaty of Frankfort, I had all the trouble in the world to get back into my former costume, which I was being strongly persuaded to get rid of. The recollection of my momentary nakedness, so to speak, long pursued me like that of an outrage to which I had nearly fallen a victim at an early age. One good result I got from it, though,—and that is a great scepticism when I hear the hollow phrases which some good patriots go spluttering.

However, the ridiculous idea never entered my head that one single man, even though his name was Bismarck, could be the only cause of the disasters heaped upon my country. I prefer to see in these a necessary phenomenon in the social and political evolution of Europe.

Hence my impartiality towards the man who played such an important *rôle* in these unhappy circumstances—to which I owe it that I was snatched back to that shrine of my race and fatherland which I have never since been tempted to forswear.

This much being said, I go on without further preamble to the psychological key which I promised the reader.

Bismarck is, evidently, from the biological point of view, a man of *elemental* force and power. This explains generally the inequalities, the exaggerations, the contradictions, the extraordinary paradoxes, out of which his politics have been kneaded like a ball. But that doesn't explain his inner nature, which is so subtle and varied that it has found as many diverse interpretations as it has found diverse biographers, although a single word, a single epithet, joined to his name is sufficient to dispel the darkness and to create light about his character.

Bismarck is, above and beyond all else, a *humorist*.

He has carried into diplomacy the same manner and way of thought as is shown by Sterne, Carlyle, Lamb,

Heine, and Schopenhauer in literature. He borrows from some of these their sly and malicious fun, from others their love of paradox and trifling comedy, from all their spirit of contradiction, their disdain of others and themselves, grafted on a spirit of brutal frankness that approaches cynicism,—a cynicism which in Bismarck's case is almost negatived by a most lively sensibility and by a remarkable number of domestic virtues, in which, and in which alone, his monstrous egotism ceases to appear.

As a diplomatist he proclaims the nothingness and vanity of all diplomacy; as a political orator he condescends to defend himself by nothing but squibs and sarcasms more or less witty; while toiling, as he says, for God and his country, the Protestant patriot, nevertheless, confesses his pessimism and the unsatisfactory nature of his faith. These distinctive features, so characteristic of the *humorist*, are especially seen in his private correspondence. I shall give a few examples. And, first of all, this passage from a letter sent to Madame Bismarck from Frankfort, where the Federal Diet was then sitting:

"Unless foreign complications supervene — and we Federal delegates with our extraordinary wisdom are perfectly incapable of either getting into them or out of them—I know exactly all we'll accomplish in one, two, or five years, and I wager I'd do it in four and twenty hours if the others would only be sensible and sincere for a single day.

"I always knew these gentlemen made their soup with nothing but water, but their present concoction is so insipid and weak that I confess it surprises me. Send me your schoolmaster or foreman on the roads, and if they're washed and trimmed, they'll make as good diplomatists as these. I have made gigantic progress in the art of saying nothing in an infinite number of words; I write letters many pages long, clear and precise as articles seen at the

bottom of water; and if, after reading them, Manteuffel can tell me what's inside them he's better up than I am! Nobody, not even the most rabid of Democrats, can imagine without actual knowledge all the emptiness and quackery that passes for diplomacy."

Humour, by its very definition, has for mode of expression a kind of dry impassivity,—a sensibility, true, but a sensibility that is self-centred instead of being expansive, a sensibility which is often at the bottom both of egotism and melancholy, since it springs from the most intimate sources of our being; and for its accidental peculiarities, again, humour is often marked by a predominance of inherited *physical* instincts and affinities over the *spiritual* tendencies of the individual. 'Tis this last peculiarity that has made the Prussian giant, for all his apparent capacity for intellectual freedom, a grim and patient believer, bowed down beneath the double weight of his Emperor and his God, whose diverse prerogatives he willingly confounds, attached to this tyrannic duality like a dog to his master. Yes, like one of those great big dogs with which he loves to surround himself, and some of which resemble him so terribly with their searching and steady glower, their shaggy overhanging eyebrows, their immobile, mask-like, and leonine features, and the firmness of their powerful jaws that open only to ravin or to bite.

Bismarck himself explained one evening to his guests at Ferrières, how his piety, atavistic in a way,—indeed, I had almost said, congenital,—was at the basis of his politics and all his human aspirations—which, let me remark in passing, have put back for a century, at least, the general progress of humanity.

"I don't understand how anyone can live without believing in God and a future life. If I were not a Christian I would not consent for a moment to remain at

my post; if I did not obey my God, if I did not depend upon Him, I should certainly not occupy myself with the so-called grandeurs of this world. I've enough to live on and a good enough position without that. Why should I torment myself, and why should I toil without ceasing? Why should I expose myself to care, envy, calumny, if I did not feel myself obliged to fulfil my duty to God? If I did not believe in the Divine Will which has decreed that the German nation shall become virtuous and great, I should never have entered on a political career,—or, if I had done so, I should have immediately quitted it. I know not whence I get a feeling of duty, if it be not from God. Titles and honours have no charm for me. I believe firmly in a future life, and that is why I am a Royalist! *By nature I am rather a Republican!* It is my inexpugnable faith alone that has enabled me to fight against all the follies imaginable during the last ten years. Take away my faith, and you take away my country. If I was not a devout believer in Christianity, if the edifice I build did not repose on the miraculous foundation of religion, I should never be the Chancellor you know. Find me a successor who is interpenetrated with the same principles, and I shall retire immediately. Ah, how happy I should be to go! I adore the country; woods and fields and the face of nature fill me with ravishing delight; and if you took my faith in God from me I should pack my trunks and be off to Varzin to-morrow to look after my oats."

Now, let me place beside these two extracts, in which the soul of Bismarck reveals itself in its two essential phases, the following definition of humour by M. Taine, a writer with whose work the ex-Chancellor is exceedingly familiar:

"In the humorist the underlying physical nature, hidden though it mostly is by a habit of reflective melan-

choly, suddenly reveals itself every now and again. You see a grimace, or some rascal-gesture—and the next moment his face is as solemn as before. Add to this the unforeseen outbursts of a bizarre imagination. The humorist hides a poet; all at once, in the monotonous haze of prose, at the end of a dry piece of reasoning perhaps, comes a flashing outburst; whether it be beautiful or ugly it doesn't matter—sufficient that it is striking. These unequal qualities give a faithful clue to the character of the Northerner, brooding by himself, energetic, imaginative, fond of abrupt contrasts founded on his own melancholy reflections, with constant unexpected revelations of his physical instinct, so different in every way from the Classic, the Latin races, races of orators and artists, writing always under the gaze of the public, happy only in the spectacle of harmonious forms, among whom imagination itself is subjected to rules, and pleasure seems simple and natural."

You see that this definition, borrowed from Taine's *History of English Literature*, applies with astonishing accuracy to the character of Bismarck, so much so that it seems to us as if it must have been derived from the Chancellor's private letters and private conversation. Was it not Bismarck who uttered the strange aphorism that "man should never take anything seriously," and does not his public life seem partly inspired by this maxim of Schopenhauer?—"Neither to love nor to hate is the first half of the science of life; to be silent and believe nothing is the second half."

Hence his eternal contradictions, his tacking upon new courses, his sudden changes, his abrupt reversals of former and apparently fixed policies. For those biographers who credit him with remarkable consistency, will cause a smile in anyone who looks at all closely at his political ongoings and his innumerable *volte-faces*, all of them so marvellously

adapted to the shifting nature of European diplomacy, for Bismarck, while seeming to guide European diplomacy: in reality simply suits his own pace to it.

To those who pompously trumpet and praise his consistency, he would be the first to answer, with his usual irony, that consistency was a grand thing, maybe in a grocer or other tradesman, but that it was the worst possible ingredient in a parliamentary salad or Chancellor's ragoût, — where the chief thing to do was to hide the taste of the nutmeg and to veil the errors of yesterday by the truths of to-morrow.

Finally, to those who insist on treating him like a great political genius, a man like Richelieu or Napoleon, marked by destiny with the seal of fore-ordained and terrible events and of fatal resources, Bismarck will say, what he once said to M. de Blowitz, "That he does not believe in your 'man of destiny,' and that in his opinion great politicians owe their reputation, if not to pure chance, then to circumstances at least which they themselves could not foresee."

As a matter of fact, the ex-Chancellor owes all his political fortune, or at any rate the unforeseen course taken by his destiny in 1839, to a wild and most humorous whim of his. He was then Referendary of the Civil Court at Aix-la-Chapelle. One of his chiefs kept him waiting once, cooling his heels in an anteroom. When at last he was admitted to the great man, quoth Bismarck, "I came to have a talk with you, but, come to think of it, when I'm here I'll just hand in my resignation!"

This absurd affair it was that turned Bismarck from a mere career in the Executive.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

The Ancestors of Otto von Bismarck—The Old Field-Marshal's Goblet—Schönhausen and its two Castles—Bismarck's Parents—Spoiled Honeymoon—The French Invasion—The Sorrows of a Prussian Major—Singular Advertisement of Birth—A Franco-German Pun—An Unusually Vulnerable Statue of Hercules!—Birth of Malvina von Bismarck—Bismarck as a Pupil at Grey Friars' Gymnasium—*The Abiturienten Examen* 1

CHAPTER II

Bismarck at the University of Göttingen—A Fine Student!—Worthlessness of Academic *Vetos*—The Dogs of Ulm upon the Scene—First Encounter with the Rector—The Door of the *Carcer*, or University Prison—The *Hannovera* Club and its Insignia—About Bismarck's Boots—Bismarck loses a Bet about the Unification of Germany—Bismarck the Duellist placed in the Index by the Academic Council—Remorse when Too Late—Bismarck expelled from Jena—All's Well that Ends Well—Bismarck appointed *Auscultator* 11

CHAPTER III

First Humorous Incident recorded about *Auscultator* Bismarck—A Stubborn Divorcée—Bismarck as a Man of the World—Lesson in Hospitality given to Attaché—Military Service—Bismarck saves his Groom's Life and gets a Medal—His Swimming Powers—As Gentleman Farmer—The Legend of the *Tolle Yunker*, or "Mad Squire"—The Knights of Idleness—The Time of his Private Letters—Funny Fox-hunts—A Farmer's Worries—Cynicism or Humour—Which?—How to make Fire from Peace—Bismarck gives up the Civil Service—Love Idyll—An Ardent Wooer—He marries Fraulein Johanna von Puttkamer—His Skill as a Nurse—His Children and Grandchildren 21

CHAPTER IV

PAGE

Bismarck as Prussian Deputy and Champion of Divine Right—At Frankfort—Pessimism and Bathing by Moonlight—How he brought his Landlord to his Senses—Special Mission—The Pictures he gives us in his Correspondence—Travel and Diplomacy—Plenipotentiary Truffles—Through Russia in a Post-chaise—Bismarck and his Bears at St. Petersburg—Cutting Joke of Prince Bariatinsky—Bismarck Ill—Appointed to the Embassy at Paris 41

CHAPTER V

Bismarck at Paris in 1862—The Embassy—His Opinion of the Emperor's Looks, and the Empress's—A Fit of the "Blues"—He feels Lonely in Paris—Walks to the Bois de Boulogne and St. Germain—A Saying of Guizot—Thoughts in an Album—Bismarck recalled to Berlin and named President of the Council of Ministers—Eating, Hunting, and Furious Horsemanship—A Price on his Head—The Attempt of the Student Blind—Bismarck gets his Photo taken in company of a Public Singer—His Sorrow and Regret—Sadowa—How he drove his spur into the King's Horse—Triumph of his Policy—Napoleon III. declares War on Prussia 54

CHAPTER VI

The Hereditary Foe—With God's Help—Bismarck Campaigning—The Secret of his Sleeplessness—His Fellow-workers—Friction between the Chancellor and the Military Head-quarters—Bismarck's View of the German Generals—Bismarck's own Strategy—He tells about the Capitulation of Sedan—The Diplomatist-Humorist bested by a Simple Bavarian Fusilier . . 73

CHAPTER VII

The Chancellor of the Germanic Confederation at Versailles—Gastronomical Discussions and Conferences—A Witticism of Arsène Haussaye—The Best of Slops—Bacchanalian Feats of the Diplomat-Cuirassier—Berlinese Jokes—The "Menu of Foreign Affairs"—A Well-watched House—The National Industry of Prussia—The Versailles Factory and its Master—Ingenuous Prussian Correspondent—How History is Written—Bismarck in his Dressing-gown—The Miscellaneous Column of the *Nouvelliste de Berlin* 87

CHAPTER VIII

PAGE

Comte d'Hérisson's Journal—Bismarck overwhelmed with Praise—Comte d'Hérisson Misled—Further Table-talk—Bismarck and Rothschild's Steward—A Little Impartiality required—Theory about Cigars—Bismarck and Garibaldi—Witty but Vague—Chancellor's Little Present—The Diplomat's Decorations—Prussians leave Versailles—Madame de Jessé's Guinea-fowls—The Romance of a Clock—Parallel between Stage Scenery and History—Bucolic—Bismarck has the Last Word 99

CHAPTER IX

Bismarck as Landed Proprietor—Friedrichsruh—The Chancellor's Scepticism—His Literary Tastes and Opinions—As a Speaker—His Tactics in the Reichstag—Eloquence and Liquor—A Joke about Alsace-Lorraine—"I fear God, dear Abner; other Fear I have None"—"Might masters Right" 113

CHAPTER X

Bismarck in 1874—The Chancellor's Palace at Berlin—Humorous View of the French and Germans—A Parliamentary Soirée in 1879—The Lion grows Old—The Attempt on his Life at Kissingen—The Arnim Affair—Family Happenings—A Letter from the Chancellor to the Brother of his Old Groom—His Seventieth Birthday—National Subscription—The Château of Schönhausen and the French Cannon—Gifts from various Quarters—The Year of Sorrow—Bismarck Weeps 126

CHAPTER XI

Court Holy Water—Bismarck made a Doctor of Divinity—The Gods forsake Him—His "Farewell to Fontainebleau"—His Fine Friends play the Turncoat—A Movement towards Friendship on the Emperor's Part: the Bottle of Steinberger—Triumphal Return to Berlin and Platonic Reconciliation—The Patriarch of Friedrichsruh—Death of Princess Bismarck—The Eightieth Birthday: a Repetition of the National Celebration in 1885—The Sword of "the Fear of God" signifying that of Damocles—Gifts and Homage from the General Public 142

CHAPTER XII

At Friedrichsruh: The Old Man of the Sachsenwald—Bismarck as Countryman—Professor Schwenninger: how he became

PAGE

Bismarck's Doctor—The Diet of Salt Herrings—The Patriarch's Abode—His Private Rooms—Troublesome Digestion—A Recollection of the Past—Bismarck Speculating on the Stock Exchange—Diplomatic Trickery 158

CHAPTER XIII

Bismarck's Bedroom—Tyras I., Tyras II., and Rebecca—A Dogs' Paradise—Bismarck as a Lover of Animals—Weighing-machine and Strength-measurer—The Varying Weight of the Chancellor—The Heights of the Whole Family—Bismarck his own Barber—The Boudoir of the Late Princess—How he gets through the Night—Difficulty in Annexing the Property in the Neighbourhood—A Village without Hair-dresser, Parson, Magistrate, Church, or School—Bismarck manufactures Wooden Paving-blocks—Stories of the Forest: the *Horlá* of the Sachsenwald 172

CHAPTER XIV

At Varzin: Underwood—The Castle and Park of Varzin—Bismarck's Precise Knowledge of Topography—He Missed his Proper Vocation—His Tumbles from Horseback—Pathology of the Brain—A Worn and Weary Post-office—Bismarck like Herbert Spencer in one respect—The Village Inn—The Mysterious Staircase—How Bismarck gets rid of Inquisitive Visitors—Personal Pride—A Belgian Diplomatist's Opinion—Melancholy Confession 190

CHAPTER XV

Notes about his Portraits and Cartoons 205

CHAPTER XVI

Bismarck's Place with Posterity 233

BISMARCK AT HOME

CHAPTER I

Otto von Bismarck's Ancestors—The old Marshal's Goblet—Bismarck's Relatives—Interruption of the Honeymoon—French Invasion—The Tribulation of a Prussian Major—Peculiar Announcement of a Birth—Otto's Wit—Birth of Malvina von Bismarck—Bismarck a Pupil at the Grey Friars' Gymnasium—The *Abiturienten* Examination.

THE ex-Chancellor's ancestry comprises a long line of weather-beaten Pomeranian soldiers, whose deeds cannot prove of much interest to the reader. Their lives were spent in drinking, hunting, and in shedding blood on every Prussian battlefield.

August Frederick von Bismarck, great-grandfather of the ex-Chancellor, was a colonel of a dragoon regiment, who met his death at Chotusity, in a battle with the Austrians (May 1742). The wife of the colonel, whose maiden name was Dewitz, was descended from the distinguished field-marshal von Derfflinger, whose niece, Charlotte Schoenfeldt, married the Chancellor's grandfather, Charles Alexander, second son of Colonel von Bismarck. Thus we see that Bismarck has Derfflinger blood in his veins.

Prince Bismarck, who holds his ancestors in great

esteem, has a silver goblet, ornamented with an embossed locket, which once belonged to the old marshal. For a long time this has been used in pouring out beer at the parliamentary soirees held at the Radziwill Palace. Charles Alexander was a quiet, intellectual man, who contented himself with cultivating the Muses. However, the warlike element appeared again in his four sons, especially in Charles William Ferdinand, the Chancellor's father, who inherited the propensity in a marked degree. At the age of twelve he enlisted in the Cuirassiers and, as orderly officer to the Duke of Brunswick took part in the campaign against France in the year 1792.

From such ancestors came Otto von Bismarck, so there are good reasons for our finding the Prince of a restless disposition. His early studies, indeed, suffered considerably on account of his excitable and dissipated turn of mind. He in no wise resembled those dreamy, thoughtful children who from the threshold of life show signs which betoken unmistakably future celebrities. The Prince was a strong and healthy child, of an extremely active disposition, ever ready to play the truant when the opportunity presented itself. At the age of sixteen he deliberately neglected his examinations in order to indulge in his favourite sports, which included hunting, fishing, and long rides across country.

Otto von Bismarck was born at Schönhausen (Brandenburg), on the 1st April 1815.

Schönhausen Castle, as it is seen in the accompanying illustration, dates from the eighteenth century, when Otto's great-grandfather, Colonel von Bismarck, rebuilt it on the site of the old feudal *schloss*.

After resigning his position in the army, Otto's father married into a middle-class family. His bride was Louisa Menken, the granddaughter of a professor of philosophy, and the daughter of a king's counsellor, the latter having

died in 1801. They had six children, three of whom only survived—the ex-Chancellor, Bernard Otto his brother, and his sister Malvina, who in 1844 married a member of the House of Lords, Oscar von Arnim. Bismarck has always been devoted to Malvina, to whom reference will frequently be made in this volume. The letters written to her by her brother will be reproduced. It will be seen

THE OLD CASTLE OF SCHÖNHAUSEN.

that these effusions display in turn fine feeling and fine sarcasm, and constitute, far better than any official document, a sort of anthology of the different moods which are most characteristic of the ex-Chancellor.

Before continuing further, we must point out that Schönhausen Castle, already mentioned, is the ancestral dwelling of Bismarck. It is of much less importance than

another castle in the same neighbourhood, which had also been the property of one of the branches of the Bismarck family, who were obliged to sell it. Later on, we shall see how this castle fell again into the hands of the Chancellor, and how the title of nobility attached to the manor was appropriated by him.

In the month of July 1806, William Ferdinand, the father of the Prince, relinquished his post in the army, as we have already said, in order to marry Louisa Menken. The young people had met each other at Court, where Louisa—who was an orphan—had been made much of.

William Ferdinand took his wife to his residence at Schönhausen, where, before three months had elapsed, their honeymoon was darkened by the declaration of war. The French army invaded the country at the beginning of October, and Marshal Soult established his quarters in a castle near Schönhausen.

The Germans have greatly reproached the French with acts of barbarity at Schönhausen Castle committed during this invasion. It is said everything was utterly destroyed by Soult's cavalry; and the genealogical tree of the Bismarck family is supposed to have been slashed with a sword; and Frau von Bismarck herself ran the risk of being outraged.

As a matter of fact, neither master nor mistress was hurt, for, realising their danger, they had fled and taken refuge in a neighbouring wood, where they passed the night. On their return the next morning, they were more than surprised to find the village and the castle exactly as they had left them. Not even the secret place where Ferdinand von Bismarck had concealed some gold in the earth had been touched; and although some coins, not carefully covered, were visible, no one had taken the trouble to pick them up. Nevertheless the ex-

Prussian major went immediately to the headquarters of the French and requested a guard, a favour which was at once granted him. From this we conclude that the invasion could not be the cause of the Chancellor's hatred of the French, as many of his biographers make him say.

In 1816, a year after the birth of Otto, his parents inherited from a male cousin the estates of Kultz, Jarchelin, and Kniephof. The last named, which is situated in the district of Maugard (Pomerania), was the most considerable, and it was there that the family took up its abode.

From Otto's earliest infancy, strange to say, his mother decided that he should be a diplomatist, just as she had decided that her son Bernard should enter the civil administration.[1]

Both these desires were fulfilled, contrary to what usually happens, for children rarely follow the vocations selected by their parents.

Another singularity that brings into the light a custom of the German nobility of that period, is the manner in which Bismarck's father thought proper to announce the birth of his son.

He had inserted in a local newspaper:

"The wife of Ferdinand von Bismarck was this morning safely delivered of a healthy son. The friends of the family *are requested to dispense with their congratulations!*

"Ferdinand von Bismarck."

German biographers have endeavoured to discover some remarkable traits in Prince Bismarck during his childhood. I have repeatedly read the anecdotes narrated, and must confess that they have always struck me as

[1] A gipsy's prophecy is supposed to have accounted for her decision.

being so insignificant that I shrink from reproducing them here.

On attaining the age of six, Otto was sent to the Plamann Institution at Berlin, where he joined his brother Bernard. The few years that he spent there left him with nothing but the most unpleasant memories. The food was poor, the discipline severe; and, notwithstanding the influence which he succeeded in exercising over his comrades, he was feared rather than loved. Happily, frequent holidays proved a diversion amid the many troubles which the boy had to endure. Among the fields and woods of Pomerania, where he was able to gratify his inherent liking for the hunting-field, he renewed his strength and gathered fresh courage.

This seems the place to relate a comical anecdote of the boy, as it not only proves the danger of placing firearms in the hands of a lad, but also reveals for the first time Bismarck's humorous temperament.

In the glade at the park of Schönhausen is a moss-covered statue of Hercules. On one occasion, little Otto, when returning empty-handed from shooting, passed at the rear of the mythological figure. The idea that it would be great fun to aim a loaded gun at Hercules' back no sooner crossed his mind than the deed was done. When Otto's father noticed the mischievous act, he said to his son—

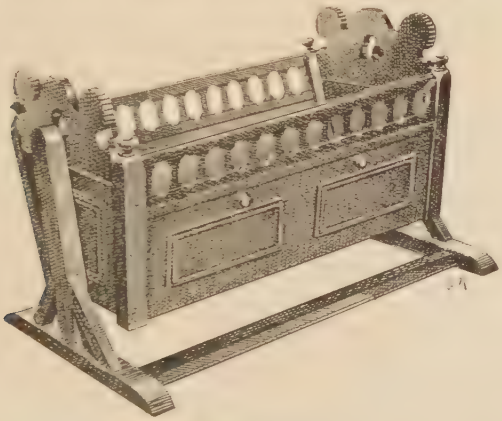
"It was you who did that?"

"Yes," said the boy. "But I shouldn't have thought he'd be so sensitive. As soon as I fired he laid his right hand on the spot at which I aimed, and he is still in this position."

The fact is that Hercules is represented in the park with his hand on his back.

Otto's father laughed heartily at the boy's drollery, and allowed the matter to drop.

The year 1827 brought with it the birth of Malvina. It was about this time that Otto entered the Frederick William Gymnasium, where he was fortunate in attracting the attention of Dr. Bonnell, a distinguished professor, who had been captivated by the boy's eager eyes, sparkling with life and energy. In a very short time, under the professor's tuition, the pupil began to make great progress in history and French. Otto grew so fond of his master, indeed, that at the completion of his second year, when his brother Bernard left the rhetoric class at the head of the list, to



BISMARCK'S CRADLE.

begin studying for the law, Otto too left the school to follow Dr. Bonnell, who had gone to the Grey Friars' Gymnasium. A few months afterwards he took up his residence entirely with his tutor.

Notwithstanding the praise bestowed upon him by Dr. Bonnell (the Chancellor showed his affection and gratitude towards his old master, who by then had become manager of the Werder Gymnasium, by entrusting to him the education of his two sons Herbert and William),—notwithstanding all this, one cannot say that Bismarck

distinguished himself to any great degree at the *Cloître Gris*. He did not succeed in passing the *Abiturienten* examination (for the degree of Bachelor) until April 1832.

Indeed, his *carte* states he had a tendency to *sécher* (miss) the lectures, as the boys term it in the French schools.

CHARLES WILLIAM FERDINAND VON BISMARCK, THE CHANCELLOR'S FATHER.

CHAPTER II

Bismarck at the University of Göttingen—A Lively Student—Inanity of Academic *Vetos*—The Ulm Dogs come on the Scene—First Conflict with the Rector—The Door of the *Carcer*—The *Hannovera* and its Corporate Insignia—About Boots—Bismarck loses a Bet about the Unity of Germany—The Academical Council forbids Bismarck to fight a Duel—Tardy Remorse—Bismarck is Dismissed from Jena—All's Well that Ends Well—Bismarck is Appointed *Auscultator*.

A MONTH later we find Otto von Bismarck a law student at the University of Göttingen. He was at this time a handsome young man with deep clear eyes (the only expressive feature in an otherwise immobile face), that seemed to drink in everything on which they rested.

The immobility of Bismarck's face, which is said to be hereditary, was already noticeable. The entire activity of his mind and soul seemed to be concentrated in penetrating eyes of intense and remarkable depth. Noticeable too, even then, was the harmony of feature that later distinguished the Imperial Chancellor's face—a wonderful face in its symmetry, amplitude of brow, fineness of nose, well-curved nostrils, powerful and solid chin, and domed Titan's head. These features have been made so familiar by caricaturists that it is quite unnecessary for me to expatiate upon them here. Besides, the reader has only to turn to the authentic portraits to be found in this volume, which portray Bismarck at every period of his life.

At that time his rapid growth had given his features a refined and spiritual look, and, owing to the same reason, as

we are told by his tutors, his limbs were remarkably long and thin. His life as a student was very much like that of his fellows; the greater part of his time being passed in the beer-house and fencing-school. Very little time was given to work. Not that he had any particular taste for such a wild and empty life: indeed, he had already conceived a great love for the hedgerows and the hunting-field. His attachment to dumb animals was so deeply rooted that he always preferred the society of the dogs, which had become his inseparable friends, to that of his drinking companions. But he had to sacrifice his individual tastes for the honour of being admitted to the privileges of a university which enjoyed the reputation of being the most celebrated in Europe.

The life which the German student leads has often been portrayed. We are told how he lives with pipe in mouth and glass in hand, and how every altercation is settled by a duel; although, on entering the university, the student pledges himself to abstain from drinking beer and from duelling!

Our hero, for his part, engaged in twenty-eight duels, in which he generally came off victorious, although on one occasion he received on his left cheek-bone a scar which was visible to the last.

Anecdotes relating to Bismarck's student-life are plentiful, of course, but in my opinion they should not be trusted much. Besides, they are of little value save to illustrate the natural growth of the humorous side of Bismarck's character and his sympathy with dumb animals.

This latter, as a matter of fact, is generally found to be characteristic of great humorists, being their natural counterbalance to their contempt for mankind.

Bismarck takes an especial interest in big dogs with human-like faces, whose keen looks show a zealous but unsociable nature similar to his own. Indeed, dogs of

this kind play some part in all Bismarck's foolish escapades.

His first conflict with the rector of the university is worthy of record.

Bismarck thought fit to give a banquet on his admission to the *Hannovera* Society. They drank freely, as is usually the case at such times, and Bismarck, becoming over-excited during an ardent discussion, rose and threw an empty bottle out of the window. A person, who chanced to be passing at that moment, complained of the act, and as the banquet had taken place at Bismarck's residence, close to the ramparts, he was summoned to appear before the rector.

Bismarck had not risen from his bed when the order addressed to *Dominus de Bismarck* reached him.

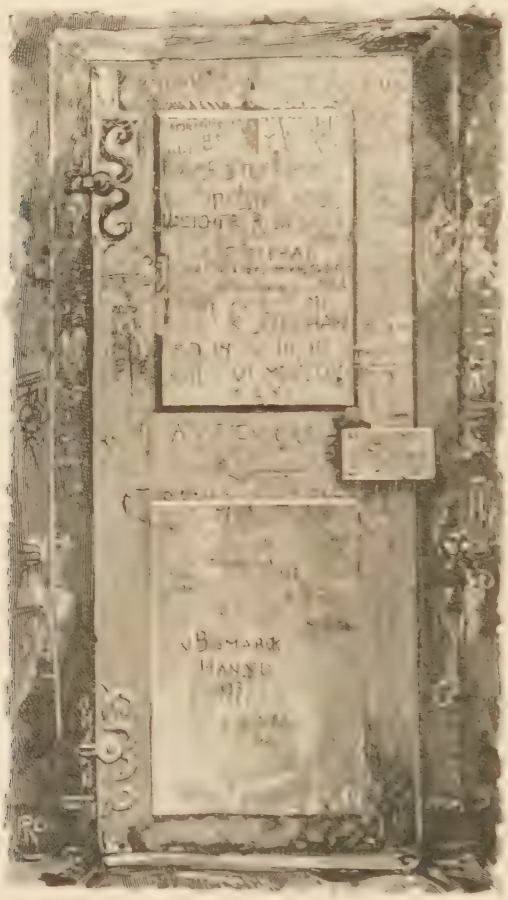
Young *Dominus* rose speedily, put on a dressing-gown, slipped into his *Kanonenstiefel* (top-boots), placed a "cylinder" on his head, and thus strangely clad, with his pipe[1] in his mouth and followed by his big English dog, he presented himself before the rector.

The sight of the animal so terrified the latter that he took refuge behind his writing-table. Meanwhile he inflicted a fine of five thalers as a penalty for such an unsightly appearance, and to teach the offender to present himself before the Academical Tribunal in proper attire.

Then Bismarck, who had tried to prove during the cross-examination that the bottle might have flown through the window by itself, and had proposed by way of proof to cause the rector's inkstand to fly likewise, was sentenced to three days in the *Carcer*. Besides this, he had other oppor-

[1] The pipe is a part of the traditional insignia of a German student, and each of them possesses a regular collection of pipes. At that time a university edict was proclaimed which authorised the students to smoke anywhere but in the street. Those who disobeyed were threatened with the *Carcer*, or university prison.

tunities of becoming more frequently acquainted with the university prison, for he has told us that at Berlin, as well as



DOOR OF UNIVERSITY PRISON AT GÖTTINGEN, WITH BISMARCK'S NAME CUT ON IT.

Göttingen, he had been imprisoned for periods of seventeen days. However, when one is a *Dominus* one can no doubt make some easy arrangement as regards the *Carcer*,

and therefore we may look upon Bismarck's word "imprisoned" as an exaggeration. Be that as it may, Bismarck's name in very legible characters is still to be found on the door of a *Carcer* at Göttingen. We must add that some biographers have doubted the authenticity of this evidence, as sixty-six years have now elapsed since Bismarck's imprisonment.

The *Hannovera*, in which Bismarck had become one of the most highly esteemed members, both as drinker and rowdy, held its meetings at the "Old Titmouse Inn," or at the "Marwedal Garden"—in accordance with the custom that requires the German students' meetings to be invariably at a public-house. They were arrayed in a queer costume. It consisted of a blue or black velvet jacket, or a red plaid, with an enormous pair of long spurred boots, and a small cap of the colours of the province from which they came. Bismarck always wore a saucer cap, a black jacket, and patent long-boots.

A well-known story runs that Bismarck once threatened his bootmaker that, if he did not deliver his boots within twenty-four hours, he should be devoured by his dog. The unfortunate bootmaker worked all night, spurred on by the terrible voice of Bismarck, who at frequent intervals came prowling around the shop and reminded the tenant of what was in store for him if the work was not completed in the prescribed time! All this because Bismarck had told his comrades that he would have the boots by the next day, and he was determined that his words would not be belied.

Bismarck tells us a more interesting incident with regard to the unity of Germany.

"It was in the year 1833," he said to Herr Busch, "I wagered five-and-twenty bottles of champagne with an American comrade in the *Hannovera* that Germany would be united within twenty-five years. The winner agreed to stand the wine, and the loser was to cross the

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

Atlantic to drink it. I had, of course, laid the wager that Germany would be united, and when in 1853 the twenty-five years had elapsed, I thought of the bet, and as I had lost, I intended to start for America to look for my old comrade, but upon inquiry I learnt that he was dead, and no wonder, for his name was something like 'Collin.' The singularity of the thing is that in 1833 I already had a presentiment of that unity which is now an accomplished fact."

This is the first time that we find Bismarck contradicting his fundamental theory, which denies Providence and attributes all political events to chance.

The Prince, as we have said, fought no less than twenty-eight duels during the two half-years he spent at Göttingen. More than this, he acted as a witness in an encounter where the pistol was used. This caused him to be sentenced by the Academic Tribunal to ten days in the *Carcer*, notwithstanding his own explanation that the favourable issue of the duel was owing to his interference!

Henceforth he was closely watched by the Council, which seized the first opportunity that offered of forbidding him to fight a duel, and threatened him with dismissal if he did so. He was compelled, therefore, to content himself henceforth with being a spectator; but in this rôle he was no more fortunate, for on one occasion he was confined three days in the *Carcer* for having encouraged by his presence a series of unlawful acts.

Naturally such a dissipated life was very bad for the studies, if not for the student himself. He has often declared that the time spent at Göttingen was a black spot upon his youth. His own words are—"To have been compelled by my association with the *Hannoverra* to lead a kind of life I should never have chosen, thereby involving myself in debt, was the great evil of my youth. For years I have been haunted by the thought of those crushing debts, and my only consolation has been the thought that if I had

THE CHANCELLOR'S MOTHER.

been as bad as the students of the present day my whole life would have been insufficient to atone for my misdeeds."

Later, in 1885, Bismarck made a similar statement to a delegate who had presented him with a volume of his official university notes, as a birthday gift. He said: "It is not without grief that I recall that period of my life, and I am convinced that the Academic Tribunal made far greater allowances for me than I ever deserved."

Otto von Bismarck's closing days at Göttingen were marked by an adventure, which no doubt accounted for the resolution he made shortly afterwards to finish his studies in Berlin.

He was invited by the students of Jena (who had heard of his exploits, and were anxious to make his acquaintance) to pay them a visit. Very much gratified by this attention, he went to Jena, accompanied by his friend Trotha. The few days they spent there were entirely occupied in feasting and revelling. One fine morning, however, when Bismarck was still in bed, he received a visit from the university beadle, who brought a notice from the Academic Council, respectfully requesting him to leave the town immediately, on the ground of the pernicious influence he was exerting over the youthful members of the University of Jena.

Bismarck was the guest of the "Thuringen Society," the members of which decided to manifest their indignation against such a dismissal by arranging for their visitor a triumphal departure. For this purpose a landau, drawn by six horses, was engaged, and the delegates of the Society, taking their seats with the two expelled students in their midst, conducted them in this way as far as the gate of the town, being joined *en route* by a crowd of fellow-collegians who shouted lustily *Gaudeamus igitur.*

Bismarck's iron constitution, however, did not appear to suffer from the excesses which we have seen laid to his

charge. It was the Chancellor later on who had to endure the consequences of the student's folly. Once only, during his second half-year, was he laid aside by a sickness, which proved to be a slight gastric fever. The physician prescribed quinine, but just then a parcel of sausages and goose-pie arrived from Kniephof for the patient, who chose to take the latter in preference to the quinine—and he recovered his health all the same!

At the close of the year 1833, Bismarck requested his *exeat*, which, as one can well imagine, was signed with no little relief by the rector of Göttingen University, who added a note to the effect that the student's record was anything but creditable. Even at that time the student had some days to do in the *Carcer*, but he obtained permission to complete his term of punishment at Berlin, where he was going to finish his studies.

Holidays and change of air had a wonderful effect on the young man, and made him reflect about his conduct. He arrived in Berlin full of good resolutions. But he attended to his lectures no more carefully than before, not even to those of the celebrated Savigny, who at that time occupied one of the most important chairs in the University of Berlin.

It was not before the year 1835 that Bismarck decided to engage a tutor and to study hard for his examinations. He then succeeded with a marvellous rapidity, but to this day it remains an unsolved problem how the Chancellor managed to obtain his degree.

Be that as it may, he did get it, and received his nomination as *Auscultator* in the *Stadtgericht* on the 4th of June 1835.[1]

[1] There is nothing in England similar to the *Stadtgericht*. It is a kind of Mayor's Court administered by a Bench. The *Stadtgerichts* judges are at the head of the Court, and the *Auscultators* or registrars are the subordinates. The *Stadtgericht* takes cognisance of the same sort of cases as our justices of the peace.

CHAPTER III

First Example of *Auscultator* Bismarck's Humour—An Obstinate Lady—Bismarck as a Man of the World—Lesson in Hospitality given to an Attaché of the Embassy—Bismarck rescues his Groom's Life and is presented with a Medal—His Skill as a Swimmer—The Legend of the *Tolle Yunker*—The Knights of Idleness—Private Letters—Queer Fox-hunting—A Farmer's Life—Cynicism or Humour?—How a proper Peace can be obtained—Bismarck gives up the Administrative Career—An Idyll of Love—A Hasty Betrothal—Bismarck marries Fraulein von Puttkamer—His Skill as a Nurse—The Chancellor's Children and Grandchildren.

Up to the present time Otto von Bismarck's soul, enslaved by the artificial life of the student, has slept like that of one of his own dogs. Only when he sets foot on native soil will his true soul appear and wing its flight to the very heights of humorous sentimentality! How the young country squire's eyes will grow dim merely at the sight of a cart met on his way home! For the soul of Bismarck is in reality like that of a serf, or a watch-dog of unalterable fidelity, though in his case it is served by the highest intellectual faculties and by a most general egotism.

However, the time had not yet arrived for the lost sheep to be brought back to the fold. The young *Auscultator* went to Berlin to prepare for the legal profession. This time he stayed in the family apartments in the Bährengasse which were already occupied by his brother Bernard, who has just resigned his post in the Life Guards to study for his examinations.

Otto regarded his new functions very seriously, and even displayed a somewhat exaggerated zeal, if we are to believe the following incident, which at any rate has the comic force lacking a little in those we have already seen. Once, indignant at the language and manner of a disrespectful witness, Otto sprang from his arm-chair and hurled a threat at him which was very inappropriate to the dignity of the place. "Take care, sir, or I'll have you kicked out."

This outburst naturally displeased the judge, who thought the young *Assessor* had forgotten his proper place. Addressing him in a sharp voice, he said—

"Pardon me, sir, but the kicking out is my business."

The cross-examination was resumed with renewed ardour, until the plaintiff again displayed his incivility, whereupon Bismarck interposed with the remark—

"Once more, take care, sir, *or I'll get the judge to kick you out!*"

This is the first time the characteristic wit (somewhat heavy, I admit) of the great humorist has shown itself, but in the future we shall see it oftener.

On another occasion, although Bismarck used the most persuasive and conciliatory arguments, he failed to dissuade an obstinate lady who was stubbornly bent on obtaining a separation from her husband. The lady persisted in her demand, although she had been dissuaded in turn by Bismarck and an older colleague, who boasted that he would succeed where the younger man had failed through lack of experience. At last the tribunal gave way, and granted the separation. Some time afterwards Bismarck declared that this incident had helped to disappoint him about his new career. It fully convinced him what a poor thing, after all, was the justice of this world.

In the meantime the young *Assessor* plunged into

BISMARCK AS A BOY.

gay society, and, being a ready talker, a fine dancer, and a very entertaining and cheerful guest, he was very much sought after by the society of Berlin. He was especially well received by the cosmopolitan aristocracy, because of his thorough knowledge of the English and French languages.

Society life, however, was not Bismarck's ideal. Here, again, his inclination for jests, which were often of a doubtful nature, led him into freaks which injured his reputation as a gentleman.

A story is related as to the way in which Otto endeavoured to teach a lesson to the master of a house at which he was a frequent guest. The host, an attaché of the Embassy, was in the habit of entertaining the young men about town at very grand balls, at which unfortunately no refreshment was produced. This did not suit Bismarck, whose famous appetite was not to be put off even by his love for dancing. So he arranged a plan with his comrades to give his host a lesson. While the festivities were at their height, Bismarck and his friends, at a given signal, drew a slice of bread and butter from their pockets, and commenced to appease their hunger under the eyes of the scandalised ladies.

At the following ball, refreshments were provided, which shows that the practical reproof was not altogether useless. Otto and his companions, however, did not benefit by the new arrangement, for they were called upon to apply to themselves the *sic vos non vobis* of the Latin poet, and were not invited to the ball!

At the end of the year Bismarck was promoted to the post of Referendary in the Court of Aachen. From this he passed to that of Potsdam, leaving nothing but debts behind, every place he went, to his great subsequent regret.

I shall pass rapidly over the years 1838–39, during

which Bismarck served in the army. The first part of his military year was passed at Potsdam, and was finished at Greifswald, where he had been transferred, that he might attend the lectures on agriculture at the neighbouring University of Eldena. All that is known of the ex-Chancellor at that period is that his haughty reserve and contemptuous nature annoyed his superiors, and kept his equals and inferiors at a distance.

The family estates had never been in a satisfactory condition since the French invasion, and their state was now deplorable. The death of Bismarck's mother, which occurred in the month of January 1839, caused the two sons to return home, and it was at this time that the father arranged to entrust the management of the Pomeranian estates to his sons, who determined to restore them.

The following Easter, when Otto had finished his military service, this plan was carried out, and Bismarck's father retired with his daughter to Schönhausen, relinquishing the other estates to his two sons, who were henceforth to be associated in a struggle with the disastrous financial crisis which awaited their family.

The commencement of this partnership, as one may imagine, was attended by many pecuniary difficulties. Biographers have not dwelt on that period in detail. They prefer to show us Bismarck (whose love for a soldier's life had not yet died out) performing his official duties,—that is, devoting his time to military instruction as an officer in the reserve. It was at this time that Otto rescued his stable-boy from a watery grave. As the young officer, at the head of a squadron of Uhlans, was passing through Lippehne, he saw his groom Hildebrand watering the horses at Wendelsee Lake, which was rather deep. Suddenly he perceived that the man was beyond his depth, and on the verge of drowning. Without removing his clothes (he didn't even

take off his gloves) Bismarck plunged into the small lake and saved Hildebrand from what would have proved certain death.

An account of Bismarck's courageous act, and his total disregard of his own personal danger, appeared in the *Lippehner Chronick* of the day. His conduct was described in emphatic and appropriate terms, as it deserved, for it was an example to the country squires of that time, who were not renowned for their bravery. This feat brought Bismarck a medal, about which he jested in a characteristic way, as we shall mention further on.

We may here mention that Bismarck's skill as a swimmer dated from the Plamann Institution period. In accordance with Pestalozzi's method, the children were compelled to learn diving in the River Spree. The newcomers, and the little ones generally, shrank from the performance: and the seniors, with the assistant masters, delighted in teasing them, making them drink a good draught, or even several, in order that they might soon grow accustomed to them. When Bismarck entered the institution, his reserved and timid demeanour had caused the seniors to anticipate the usual scene, but their expectations were soon disappointed, for as soon as he was brought to the water, little Otto jumped off the diving-board, leaving a group of wondering and disappointed seniors to stare at him.

But let us return to our subject, or rather, let our young gentleman farmer return to his troubles, an account of which we shall soon see in his letters. At last an opportunity had arrived for him to satisfy the thirst for freedom and liberty which he brought with him from his regiment; for on the marriage of Bernard (who settled down with his wife at Naugard, where he was to conduct the Landsrath) it was arranged that Bismarck should retain the management of Kniephof and Jarchelin, while

his brother should manage the estate of Kulz, which was nearer Naugard.

Then a very different Bismarck from the one with whom we have hitherto been acquainted is revealed to us. The emptiness of his life hangs heavily upon him, his solitude distracts him, and he plunges desperately into all kinds of physical exercise. Owing to his doings at this time, he became the *folle gendre* (mad squire) of a doubtful legend, which remained attached to his name till the very eve of his wedding. There was more than hunting and hard riding, there were riotous orgies also, which, if we are to believe historians, spread terror for miles around.

Balzac, in one of his books, describes a mysterious society, the members of which are a gang of rascals, who employ all their spare energy of mind and body in mystifying and terrifying the good people of Issoudun, their native town. Such a life may have been led by Bismarck himself at this time. But in spite of the bigger field for his mad ways and mad behaviour as a gentleman farmer in a country abounding in forests and fertile plains, his excesses were likely no greater than those of the ordinary young man of the provinces who had just laid aside his military uniform. For instance, we can almost excuse him when he turns some foxes, captured for that purpose, into the drawing-room, in the presence of his lady cousins; or when, seeing a friend struggling in a bog, instead of coming to his assistance, he offers to shoot him, in order that he might escape the horror of drowning! It is a part of his *rôle*, as an irresistible humorist, to be at one and the same time tender and violent, capable of the most delicate feelings and the coarsest jokes, and both in an exaggerated degree. Moreover, these excesses should be overlooked on account of the trying life which he was compelled to lead amid the constant flooding of his estates. Had it not been for the cloak of jesting and raillery in

which he wrapped himself, and by means of which he made the most dismal circumstances pleasant, he would have succumbed to his difficulties.

We are now coming to the letter-writing period of our hero, and we shall allow him in person to give us information respecting the different phases of his career as a diplomatist. With this object we shall reproduce some of his letters. Most of them are addressed to his sister, who had just married Herr von Arnim (October 1844). Some are dated from Kniephof, and some from Schönhausen, where Bismarck stayed from time to time in company with his father. The following letter was written the day after the young couple's departure :—

"After you had left I naturally found the house very dull. I sat down by the fireside, and smoked and pondered how very unnatural and selfish it was that girls who have brothers, and above all, unmarried ones, should recklessly plunge into matrimony, and behave as if they were only in the world for the purpose of fulfilling their own wonderful inclinations! This is a selfishness from which I know my sex, and myself in particular, to be happily free!

"At present, then, I am living here with our father, reading, smoking, walking, helping him to eat lampreys, and playing at times a comedy which he is pleased to term fox-hunting. We go out, you must know, either in pouring rain, or with six degrees of frost, as it is at present, accompanied by Ihle, Bellin, and Carl; then we surround a clump of firs, noiselessly, with all the caution of experienced sportsmen, and with due regard to the direction of the wind, although all of us (and probably my father as well) are certain that, with the exception of some poor devils gathering sticks, not a living thing exists in the wood! Ihle and Carl then go through the woods with two dogs, making a fearful and most extraordinary noise, especially

Ihle. Father stands motionless, with his gun ready to fire, exactly as if he expected to see an animal! At last Ihle cries out immediately in front of him, in a curiously high note, 'Ho there, hey, hey, catch him! hey there! shake him!' Father then asks me, in the most ingenuous way, if I have not seen something: and, putting all the astonishment in my voice I am capable of, I answer, 'Not a thing!'"

Thus they would go on, searching the grounds for three or four hours at a time, without his father's excitement, or Ihle's, or Karl's, getting colder for one moment.

"In addition to the above, we inspect the orangery twice a day, the sheep-fold once, the four thermometers indoors every hour; and, since the weather has been so clear, we have, by the assistance of the sun, brought the clocks into such a state of unison, that the one in the library is only a stroke late when the others have all done sounding. Decidedly, Charles v. was a stupid fellow—*ein dummer Kerl!*

"There is ice in the Elbe, the wind is blowing from the south-west, and the latest news from Berlin is that the glass has fallen there to 8° (Réaumur)."

Another letter, written shortly afterwards, gives us an idea of the state of the young squire's mind, and his troubles as a landowner. It runs as follows:

"My Dear Sister,—It is only with difficulty that I resist the inclination to fill a whole letter with a farmer's complaints—about night frosts, sick oxen, bad rape, dead lambs, half-starved sheep, want of straw and fodder for cattle, want of money, of potatoes, of manure. In addition to all this, Johan outside is whistling a perfectly infamous schottische, while I am not sufficiently cruel to stop him, as he is doubtless attempting to assuage the pangs of love

BISMARCK'S SISTER MALVINA.

with music. The ideal of his dreams, instigated thereto by her parents, has lately thrown him over and married a wheelwright. Speaking of marriages, I must marry; devil take me! I see it again quite clearly, for now that father has left me, the damp, mild weather is beginning to exercise a melancholy, love-longing influence over me. It is no use my struggling—I shall have to marry Fraulein ——; everybody wills it so, and nothing seems more natural, as we are both of us left lonely.

"She doesn't love me, true, but then I don't love the others. It's a good thing we can't change our inclinations with our linen, however seldom it be that we do that! Father will have told you with what dignified self-possession I received a heavy visitation of ladies on the 1st.

"On my way from Angermünde I was cut off from Kniephof by the overflow of the Zampel, and as no one would trust his horses to me, I was obliged to stay the night at Naugard, with several commercials and other travellers, who were also waiting for the water to go down.

"The bridges were afterwards carried away, so that Knobelsdorf and I, governors of two large districts, were shut in here on a small spot surrounded by the floods, and there was an interregnum of anarchy from Schiewelheim to Damm. At one o'clock in the morning, one of my carts with its load of three casks of spirits was washed away, and, for the credit of my neighbouring river the Zampel, it must be recorded that a waggoner and his horse were drowned in it.

. . . . . .

"I have no news from here except that I am still satisfied with Belein, that the thermometer is now at (ten o'clock at night) six degrees above zero, that Odin is still lame in his right fore-paw, and sits the whole day in the most touching manner by his Rebecca, whom I have been obliged to chain up.

"Good-night, *m'amie je t'embrasse* (these words are in French in the original).—Your loving brother,

"BISMARCK."

Let us point out in passing, that the merriment seen beneath these two letters prevails throughout the whole of the great man's private correspondence; for he has a special aptitude to see the comical side of even the most awful events. In those letters we remark also that the landholder is so much engrossed in the management of his land, that wherever he is he never fails to state minutely the indications of the thermometer and the barometer. The temperature, however, had no effect whatever on his health. Indeed, his appetite, which was in proportion to his gigantic stature, he did not attempt to conceal; but, on the contrary, he boasted of it so much, that for years every one in Germany was pleased to flatter his besetting weakness. Throughout the 1870–71 war, his countrymen continued to send him provisions from beyond the Rhine. It is said that on one occasion, losing at table, he remarked to Herr Busch, "If I am to work well, I must be well fed. I can make no proper peace, if they don't give me proper food and drink!"

In January 1847 he is strongly urged to re-enter the service of the State. He writes:

"They are going to make me Captain of the Dykes here, and I am pretty sure of being returned to the Diet, the Saxon Diet of course, not that of Dessau. My acceptance of the first post would be decisive as regards my future residence. There is no salary attached to it, but the conduct of the business of this office is of material importance for the welfare of Schönhausen and neighbouring property, as it depends upon how this business is conducted whether, on certain occasions, we are drowned out or not. On the other hand, my friend C—— is always at me;

he wishes to send me to East Prussia as His Majesty's Commissioner of Works there. Bernard urges me strongly to go to East Prussia. He pretends that my bent and capabilities point to my entering the service of the State, and that sooner or later I shall do so. Greet Oscar, Dether, Miss, and the children heartily.—From your most devoted brother, BISMARCK."

Bismarck, who had felt compelled to resign his office after a few weeks' probation, hesitated to take up the work again. However, at the beginning of the autumn his father died, and the young man, feeling his great loneliness, shortly afterwards accepted the appointment of District Superintendent of the Dykes. It is here necessary to remark that at the death of his father, Otto inherited Kniephof and Schönhausen.

In 1867, having come into possession of Varzin, he gave up Kniephof to Philippe von Bismarck, one of his brother Bernard's sons. The Kniephof estate gave Bismarck a right to a seat in the House of Lords, to which he is entitled for life by virtue of an imperial decree.

The love affair to which the young squire has referred in one of the preceding letters, became more serious, and the anticipated *dénouement* was at hand. However, the course of his love did not run altogether smoothly. The bride elected belonged to one of the severest families in the country—the Puttkammers. They had met two years previously at the wedding of Maurice von Blankenbourg, a friend of Otto's, who married Fraulein von Thaden-Triglaff, and Bismarck had at once been captivated by the modest and reserved air of the young girl, whose eyes, blue as fairy-bells, reflected her pure and innocent soul.

They met again, and their meeting resulted in Bis-

marck's being fully aware that the girl was impressed by his attentions. The consent of her parents still had to be obtained. The first solicitation failed, and Herr von Puttkammer could not get over his amazement at the audacity of such a scapegrace, such a dare-devil, such a rascal, daring to ask for the hand of his daughter. But the lady confessed her love for the handsome Captain of the Dykes, who had just been appointed Deputy to the Saxon Landtag, and declared that he alone was able to make her happy. Otto von Bismarck was invited to present himself at Rheinfeld, where the Puttkammer family was residing. The parents still assumed a dignified air, which they thought the occasion justified, in order that the interview might be a serious one. It was of no avail, for Otto was not in the least impressed; and it is said that, after exchanging a few words, he took the girl in his arms, and by so doing obtained, willy-nilly, their immediate consent to the betrothal.

The wedding took place on 28th July 1847, and it was soon found that the rascal, although he was no great church-goer, was a true Christian, that the scapegrace was a model spouse, that the dare-devil was a devoted father and adored his children. On the other hand, the admiration and affection of Frau von Bismarck never once wavered for a single moment, till her death, which took place in the year 1894. This is truly worthy of record, for Bismarck is one among the few great men whose conjugal sky has never been darkened by the shadow of a cloud, and who has never failed in his duties as a husband and a father. Indeed, his private life can, as regards honour and loyalty, defy the most minute inquiry.

The first year of his married life developed his innate paternal inclinations, and the following letter would lead one to think that there was in the humorist, in spite of his exaggerated display of buffoonery and his habit of

BISMARCK'S BROTHER BERNARD.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

making himself a target for his own arrows, the qualities which go to make a peaceable nurse and *grennam !*

"To Frau von Arnim.

"Schönhausen, 28*th July* 1850.

"Herewith I write you a formal letter of congratulation, on your (as I think, but will not mention it further!) twenty-fourth birthday. You are now really of age, or at all events would be so if you had not the misfortune to belong to the feminine gender, a class which, in the opinion of jurists, never cease to be minors, although they may be mothers of the stoutest boys. I will explain to you why the above apparent injustice is in reality a very wise arrangement, when I have you before me *à portée de voix humaine*, as I trust I shall have in a fortnight. Johanna (who is at present in the arms of Lieutenant Morpheus) will have told you what lies before me: the boy howling in a major key, the girl in a minor, two screaming brats, and lo, between damp rolls of linen and milk-bottles, myself, the father of a family! I struggled long, but as all the mothers and all the aunts agreed that sea-baths and sea-air alone could help poor little Marie, had I refused I should have heard of my stinginess and paternal tyranny whenever the child caught cold even up to her seventieth year. 'Ah! there you see, now,' they would say, 'if the poor child could have had sea-bathing that time!' The poor little thing has been suffering very much during the last few days from her eyes, which are watery and closed; it's caused perhaps by her eye-teeth. Johanna is anxious about it beyond measure, and, in order to satisfy her, I have summoned to-day the doctor from Stendal."

I shall close this chapter by a resumé of the well-known details regarding the descendants of the ex-Chan-

cellor, who is now a grandfather, much petted and pampered by his grandchildren. Frau von Bismarck gave birth to three children—Countess Mary (who married Count Rantzau, and had herself three sons), and the Counts Herbert and William, who when still very young took part in the Franco-German War.

The picture (on page 54) represents the three children at their various ages (seven to eleven). It is doubtless the reproduction of a proof drawn at Berlin or at St. Petersburg in 1859. These children will cross our path later on in their father's career.

CHAPTER IV

Bismarck as a Prussian Deputy and Champion of Divine Right—At Frankfort—Bathing by Moonlight—Pessimism—Bismarck outwitting his Landlord—Important Embassy—Descriptive Style in his Letters—Tourist and Diplomatist—Plenipotentiary Trullies—Across Russia in a Carriage and Pair—Bismarck and his Bears at St. Petersburg—Cruel Speech of Prince Bariatinsky—Bismarck ill—Nominated Ambassador at Paris.

It was in Venice, when Bismarck was on his wedding tour, that he had the good fortune to be introduced for the second time to Frederick William, King of Prussia, of whom he had seen but little at Potsdam. At a dinner, to which he had the honour of being summoned by His Majesty, he succeeded in attracting the attention of his Royal Master by some forcible tirades against the Liberal Party, and it was owing to this happy circumstance that Bismarck suddenly found himself within the circle of the King's favour.

Being sent by the Saxon Landtag as a delegate to the Federal Diet in Berlin, he took the tide at the flood, and in the revolutionary warfare of 1848 placed himself at the head of the Prussian reactionary party, ardently proclaiming those conservative principles to which he adhered throughout his career. Bismarck, indeed, is perhaps the only great man whose principles wavered in no period of his life. True, he has not been quite so consistent in diplomacy. The famous motto he invented at that time—"*Mit Gott für König und Vaterland*" ("With God for the King and the Fatherland")—may be paraphrased, "The country ruled by a King who trusts in God alone."

It was later that, realising the insufficiency of these two allies, he supplemented them by a third—the army.

During his stay at Berlin, Bismarck was elected to a seat in the Prussian Parliament, and founded a journal, *Kreuz-Zeitung*, which, from its outset, assumed the attitude of defender of the divine right of the monarchy. In 1851 we find Herr von Bismarck at the Frankfort Diet, where he co-operated with General von Rochow, the Prussian delegate. His colleagues did not accord him a warm welcome, and this fact undoubtedly accounts for the satire which he hurls at all the quacks, as he calls them. This is evinced in the letter of which we have published an extract in our preface. The suspicions which gather around Bismarck, keep him in the background and a sense of inferiority and impotence, which render him unserviceable to his country, throws him into a fit of depression, during which he longs intensely for his home. Every circumstance presents its darkest side to him. In order to shake off this pessimistic mood, he betakes himself to moonlight baths, and relieves his heavy spirits by pouring out these thoughts to his wife:

"The day before yesterday I dined at Wiesbaden, and contemplated the scene of my former follies with a mixture of sadness and the experience that comes with age. May it now please God to fill this vessel, where at twenty-one champagne uselessly frothed, leaving only empty dregs—with His own clear, strengthening wine. Where (and how) are —— and Miss —— now living? How many with whom I used to flirt, or dice, or drink, are now lying beneath the sod! How changed is my opinion of the world during these fourteen years, in which I have witnessed so many shifting scenes! How many things now appear small to me which then seemed great! How much is worthy of honour at which I then jeered! How many

a green leaf of our inmost nature will shoot out, grow, and wither, ere the next fourteen years are past, ere 1865 is reached, that is, if we live so long!

"It is incomprehensible to me how any human being, who thinks about himself at all, and who is ignorant of God, can live under his load of self-contempt and ennui. I don't know how I bore it formerly. If I had to live now as I did then—without God or you or the children to believe in—I really think I should throw away my life like a dirty shirt. Yet the majority of my acquaintances are of that kind, and they go on living! When I ask myself what reason they can find for living simply to bore one another, to lose their tempers, to intrigue, to spy, I am truly at a loss for an answer. Pray, don't suppose from the above scribble that I am in a particularly gloomy mood; on the contrary, I feel as if I were looking out on the mellowing foliage of a fine September day, health and spirits good, but with a soft touch of melancholy. A little home-sickness, a longing for deep woods, and for sea, for lonely places, for yourself and the children,—all this mingled with a fine sunset and some of Beethoven's music! That is how I feel."

An incident connected with the deputy's stay at Frankfort shows that Bismarck still retained some of the characteristics which marked his student days. He had taken up residence in a stylish house, but one totally unprovided with bells. Bismarck mentioned this disadvantage to the landlord, asking him to have a bell fixed in his bedroom at least. But the proprietor was determined to ignore the request, and Bismarck received a reply to the effect that if he considered a bell necessary, it must be supplied at the expense of the tenant. Bismarck, however, maintained his idea firmly, and at the dawn of the following morning the whole house was startled by a detonation. It appeared that a shot had been fired in the deputy's bed-

room, and when the landlord hastened to the place to learn what had happened, Bismarck replied with perfect equanimity, "There is no cause for alarm; I was merely firing off an unloaded pistol in order to summon my servant. As I am without a bell, you will have to accustom yourself to this, for I shall have to make use of my gun very often!"

Before that day ended the landlord ordered a bell to be fixed in Bismarck's bedroom.

In the course of a few months the Prussian deputy had triumphed over his opponents, and was no longer shadowed by the cloud of pessimism. This happy issue was due to Bismarck's own abilities and suppleness, as well as to the influence of his patrons, among whom were Manteuffel, the president, and the Prince of Prussia himself (the future Emperor William), who was soon to stand as godfather to Bismarck's second son, Count William, who is familiarly known as "Bill."

Bismarck, by the favour of the King, was despatched the following year (1852) to the Emperor Charles Francis, on a special mission in connection with the Zoll-Verein question. This particular embassy took the youthful diplomatist throughout the length and breadth of Hungary, where the Emperor, for whom Bismarck bore Frederick William's autograph letter, was touring.

The Ambassador joined the Emperor at Pesth, where he was privileged to witness the royal fêtes and hunting expeditions, of which he gives his wife an exceedingly graphic and poetic account.

Some of these letters consist of more than fifteen pages; it is therefore impossible to quote them freely. We shall only reproduce a few extracts, which will enable the reader to appreciate Bismarck's descriptive style. The following is dated from Szolnok, June 1852:

"You will find in your atlas a map of Hungary, on

BISMARCK WHEN DELEGATE TO THE FEDERAL DIET.

this a River Theiss, and then, looking above Szegedin towards its source, a place called Szolnok. I went by rail yesterday from Pesth to Alberti-Josa, where Prince W——, who married the Princess von M——, is quartered. I called upon this lady in order to be able to give —— news about her health. The place is situated on the border of the Hungarian steppes, between the Danube and the Theiss, and I wanted to amuse myself by visiting it.

"They would not let me travel without an escort, as the country is rendered unsafe by mounted robbers, who are called here *Betyares*. After a comfortable breakfast under the shade of a lime tree, I got into a very low peasant cart, filled with sacks of straw, and with three horses from the steppes in front: the lancers loaded their carbines and mounted, and away we went at a rattling gallop. On the front seat were Hildebrand, a Hungarian valet, and the coachman. The latter had a moustache, broad-brimmed hat, long black glistening hair, and a shirt which stopped at his stomach, and revealed a hand-breadth of his bare brown skin just above his white trousers. Each leg of the latter is wide enough for a woman's petticoat. They only come down to the knees, where the big boots meet them.

"Imagine turf firm and level as a table, on which for miles one sees, as far as the horizon, nothing but high bare trees; at the draw-wells, dug for the use of half-wild horses and cattle, thousands of whitish-grey oxen, with horns as long as one's arms, and as shy as deer; ragged, seedy-looking horses, herded by mounted and half naked men, armed with lance-like sticks; endless herds of pigs, amongst which there is invariably a donkey carrying the fur coat of the swineherd, and occasionally the swineherd himself; large flocks of bustards, hares, mice-like marmots, and sometimes, near a pond of brackish water, wild geese, ducks, and plovers.

"I arrived here at five o'clock. A motley crowd of Hungarians, Slovacks, and Wallachians enlivened the streets of Szolnok. The maddest and wildest gipsy tunes are echoing in my room.

"Occasionally, with wide-gaping mouths, they sing through their noses, in low, plaintive minor discords, a tale of dark eyes, or of a brave robber's death, the tones reminding one of a wind howling down the chimney. The women are, upon the whole, well built, and some of them extraordinarily beautiful; all have jet-black hair hanging behind in plaits, done up with red ribbon. The married women, with either glaring green and red kerchiefs or little velvet caps trimmed with gold on their heads, a very fine yellow silk kerchief tied over the breast and shoulders, blue short petticoats, and red morocco boots which reach up beneath the dress; fresh colouring (mostly a yellowish brown) in the face, and large, burning black eyes.

"On the whole, an assembly of these women present a shifting play of colour which would please you, the shade in each separate costume being as marked as possible. After my arrival at five o'clock, and whilst waiting for dinner, I took a swim in the Theiss, then I saw them dance the *czardas*. How I regretted that I couldn't draw! I might have transferred those fabulous figures to paper for you. Afterwards I ate fish, etc., drank a good deal of Hungarian wine, and am now going to bed if the gipsy music will let me sleep. Good night! *Istem adiamek.*

"BISMARCK."

As a contrast to the foregoing somewhat Oriental picture, here is a northern landscape, drawn by the masterly hand of Bismarck when sent on an embassy to Sweden in 1857.

The quotation rather interferes with the chronological

order which we have hitherto adopted, but the comparison is worth making, as it affords a striking illustration of the suppleness and the variety of the writer's epistolary style. Indeed, these letters reveal a humorist full of vivid instincts and quick impressions, who is attracted by the inner sense of things than rather their apparent aspects. This particular trait in Bismarck's character enables him to get all the more quickly at the real meaning of the people and things he meets.

"TROMSJŒNAES, 16*th August*.

"Far and wide, no town, no village, only a few settlers in wooden huts, with a little barley and potatoes on a few roods of cultivated land, which peep out at irregular intervals between dead trees, pieces of rocks, and brambles. Picture to yourself the most deserted part of the country near Viartlum (the Puttkammer family estate in Pomerania), make it five hundred square miles in size, covered with high heather alternating with short grass and bog, with clumps of birch, juniper, fir, beech, oak, and olive, and then in places desert-looking and thinly wooded—the whole strewn with countless stones, reaching at times to masses of rock as big as a house, a scent of rosemary and resin over all, here and there curiously shaped lakes, surrounded by heathery hills and woods; imagine this, and you have Smaland, where I am at present located. In very truth, it is the land of my dreams, unreachable by despatches, colleagues, or N. N.—but unfortunately also by yourself. I should like right well to have a little shooting-box on the banks of these quiet lakes, and to people it for some months with all the loved ones whom I now fancy assembled at Reinfeld. The winter, to be sure, would be impossible to endure here, particularly in the muddy and rain weather. . . . . .

"We dined in the shooting-box, built of wood after

a curious fashion, and situated on a peninsula in the lake.

"My bedroom, with its three chairs, two tables, and bedstead, offers no other colour than that of the plain rough pine of which they, as well as the entire house and its walls, are composed.

"The bed is very uncomfortable; but, after all the hard work, one sleeps without rocking. From my window I see a hill covered with heather blossom; upon it birch trees swinging themselves in the wind; between them peeps the mirrored lake, and on the other side there is a fir forest. Near the house a tent camp is erected for the keepers, coachmen, servants, and beaters; then comes a fortress of carriages and carts, and a small dog town of eighteen to twenty kennels—on both sides of the street which they form [1]—and out of each kennel peeps a doggy tired with yesterday's sport. . . ."

On his return to Frankfort our hero was greatly harassed by the sittings of the Diet, which, to quote his own words, were "very boring." Hence a letter to his sister informing her that hunting occupied the greater part of his day!

Bismarck's political work allowed him plenty of leisure during part of the year 1853. It was then that a great longing for rest came upon him, and no sooner was he able to gratify this than it gave place to a mania for travelling. the summer and autumn of this year find him in Belgium, Holland, Westphalia, Italy, and Switzerland.

The following years are marked by the growth of Bismarck's authority and political influence. It is indeed interesting to follow, through the medium of his private correspondence, the burlesque and varied pictures of the many phases of his new career as an Ambassador.

[1] This description is poor; it resembles the familiar French definition of a cannon—"a hole around which some copper has been placed."

Bismarck finds his migratory existence, which he terms "vagabondism," very delightful, although on principle he deplores it.

In a letter written to his wife, he says that "he preferred the House of Lords (where, unfettered by the stiffness of office, *in his political bathing drawers*, so to speak, he derived much pleasure from his duties) to the everlasting régime of truffles, despatches, and Grand Crosses which fall to the lot of a diplomatist. We may be sure that this was not an expression of his true feelings, for in reality he was wholly absorbed in diplomatic enterprise. The two chief centres of attraction were St. Petersburg and Paris, the capitals of two great nations whose alliance Bismarck definitely foresaw a half century before the actual event, in spite of the Crimean War which ended with the capture of Sebastopol, and in spite of the catastrophe to which his hatred of the Gallic race brought France and her gloomy Emperor.

Writing to his wife from St. Petersburg in 1858, he said that, politically speaking, very bad weather might be expected at Frankfort, and that he should like to keep away from it, with bear skin to dress in, caviare to eat, and elk to shoot. Bismarck also wished to go to Paris, where already, during a semi-official visit at the time of the Universal Exhibition of 1855, he had begun to throw dust in the eyes of Napoleon.

In the month of March 1859, he realised the first of these dreams. The Prince-Royal of Prussia, who had been regent for one year, having entrusted him with the appointment of Ambassador at the Russian Court, Bismarck set out for St. Petersburg. It appears that the journey, in a chaise and pair, proved anything but enjoyable, and its epic is sung by Bismarck in the lively letter which follows:

"Russia lengthened as we drove: the versts had an

increase to their family at every halt, but we are at last in the haven of the railway station, ninety-six hours from Konigsburg without stopping. Only in Kowno did we sleep for four hours, and three at Degucie, a station near Dunabourg. I think it was the day before yesterday, but I'm not sure! Now I am all right; only my skin feels burning, for I sat outside almost the whole night, and the cold varied between 1° and 12° (Réaumur) below zero. We had such deep snow that, though we had six and sometimes even eight horses, we often stuck and had to get out. The slippery hills were still worse, especially going down them. We took an hour to do a distance of twenty yards, while the horses fell four times and got entangled with one another. Besides this we had darkness and a high wind—a real German journey. On my outside seat I could not sleep on account of the cold, but I preferred to be in the fresh air, and my sleep I can make up for later."

This, however, is but the beginning. As they advance towards St. Petersburg a violent storm overtakes them, and the travellers meet with unheard-of calamities. He writes:

"At Wiraballan I found a diligence. The inside, however, was too small for a man of my length. I therefore changed places with Angel, and travelled the whole journey on the outside seat, which is open in front, a narrow seat with a sharp back. So that (apart from the severe temperature, which at night fell to 12° [Réaumur] below zero) it was impossible to sleep. I remained in this position from Friday morning to Monday evening. With the exception of the first and last night in the railway, I only slept one time for three hours and another time for two hours, on a sofa at a post-station, from Wednesday morning till Tuesday evening. When I arrived the skin

of my face peeled off. The journey occupied so long a time because a sleighing track had not been formed, owing to the deep snow having just fallen. Several times we had to get out and walk, as the carriage with eight horses absolutely stuck fast. The Duna was frozen, but a couple of miles up there was an open spot, where we crossed. The Wilna was full of ice, the Niemen was open. Occasionally there was a lack of horses, as all the post-carriages took eight or ten instead of the usual three or four. Less than six I never had, and the carriage was not over heavy. Guard, postillion, and outrider showed such zeal that I had to set my face against their horse-skinning. Slippery hills were the worst hindrance, especially coming down, when all four wheel-horses would sometimes fall over in a heap; only the outrider on the off-side leader never tumbled. Hardly were they on their legs again, when on they went at full gallop with the high-packed carriage, down hills and over bridges as fast as they could turn, with much shouting and cracking of whips. I daresay it's the right way, as the horses fell only when walking. . . ."

"*1st April.*

"As I write the date I am reminded that to-day is my birthday, the first time I have spent it in a hard frost, and the first time for twelve years without Johanna."

The newly-appointed Prussian Ambassador, with his wife and children, now settled down at St. Petersburg. They were surrounded by their horses and dogs, and a complete menagerie of animals, soon to be augmented by two splendid bears, which later on Bismarck took back to Germany. The Ambassador lived in a comfortable style, although his salary only amounted to thirty thousand thalers (£4,000), and his wife became a universal favourite in St. Petersburg society, notwithstanding their somewhat

limited hospitality, for, according to the German version, his guests were only invited to take "pot luck" with him. Other writers have told us that the diplomatist succeeded at Court, indeed but failed to make a good impression among the best society of St. Petersburg. Bismarck, by

BISMARCK'S CHILDREN: HERBERT, WILLIAM, AND MARIE (1854).

his harsh and haughty temperament, sometimes laid himself open to well-deserved retaliation. The following anecdote, reported by an English newspaper, proves it:

"While he was residing at St. Petersburg, on one occasion, in the drawing-room of Princess Bariatinsky, Bismarck gave way to his ruling passion, and grew

extremely violent in his satire, at the expense of several political personages. By railing at them, and indulging in the most offensive epithets, he made the entire company ill at ease.

"At the close of the evening, when His Excellency was leaving the Palace, the barking of a dog was heard in the courtyard. Thereupon Prince Bariatinsky went to the window and shouted to Bismarck, 'Pray don't bite my dog too!'"

The experiences of the Ambassador on his journey to Moscow, of which he gives a most graphic account, were as varied as those that befell him in going to St. Petersburg.

"Green has every reason to be the Russian favourite colour. Of the five hundred miles I have passed in travelling I have slept away about two hundred, but each hand-breadth of the remainder was green in every shade of the colour. Railway stations I have seen, but neither towns, nor villages, nor houses. I observed bushy forests of birch covering swamp and hill, a fine growth of grass beneath, long tracts of meadow land between; so it continues for fifty, one hundred, two hundred miles. Ploughed lands I do not remember to have seen, nor heather, nor sand. Solitary grazing cows or horses reminded one that there might be human beings in the neighbourhood. Moscow, seen from above, looks like a field of young wheat; the soldiers are green, the cupolas green, and doubtless the eggs on the table before me were laid by green hens. You will want to hear how I come to be here. I also have already asked myself this question, and received the answer that chance is the soul of life! But the truth of this profound saying becomes especially obvious after one has lived for ten weeks in a hotel room, exposed to the sun, with a look-out on nothing but the pavement. The charms of change become rather blunted if you have too much of

them in too short a time; therefore I determined to forego them at once, handed over all my papers to ——, gave Angel my keys, declared that in a week I'd be at Steinbeck's, and drove to the Moscow station.

"Slow harnessing and fast driving characterise this people. I ordered the carriage two hours ago; to every call I have given, every ten minutes in the past hour and a half, the answer has been, 'Immediately,' spoken with an imperturbably friendly composure; but there the matter rests. You may know my patience in waiting, but everything has its limits. Afterwards, there will be such galloping that, on these bad roads, horse and carriage will break down, and at last we shall reach the place on foot. I have, meanwhile, drunk three glasses of tea, and annihilated several eggs. My efforts to get warm have also been so perfectly successful that I feel the need of fresh air. I should, out of sheer impatience, commence shaving if I had a glass."

On finding himself back at St Petersburg, Bismarck began to view his situation with satisfaction. His work was more tedious than difficult. It involved the duties of a policeman, counsellor, judge, captain, and sub-prefect over forty thousand Prussians, the writing of fifty signatures daily, the sending of passports, and innumerable interviews. But this outside work was not allowed to interfere with diplomatic duties. Indeed, he was much disquieted by the unsettled state of Prussian politics, which, he said, were sinking deeper and deeper into the Austrian furrow.

Already Bismarck foresees a Franco-Prussian war, in which Austria, when released from her entanglement with Italy, will lend or withdraw her co-operation according to the dictates of self-interest. "God's will be done!" he concludes; "everything in this world, after all, is a question of time. Men and nations, folly and wisdom, war and peace—they come and go like the waves, but the

sea remains. There is nothing on this earth but hypocrisy and jugglery. Whether it is fever or grapeshot that tears away this mask of flesh, fall it must, sooner or later; and then, granted that they are equal in height, a likeness will, after all, manifest itself between a Prussian and an Austrian, which will make it difficult to distinguish between them. The wise man and the fool look pretty much alike when their bones are well picked. With such reflections a man soon gets rid of his narrower patriotism; but it would indeed be a subject for despair if our salvation depended upon such a precarious support."

The above extract is bitterly pessimistic. There we have revealed to us, beneath satire and raillery, the depths of the humorist's nature, which are indeed gloomy. When the man, whom we have hitherto seen happy, is led into the vale of sorrow and sadness, we shall find that his pen will speak in pathetic accents, and that his letter will be such as only the tenderest compassion could inspire:

"I have just received the news of the terrible misfortune which has befallen you and Malvina. My first thought was at once to come to you, but I had overestimated my powers. My cure has weakened me a good deal, and the thought of suddenly breaking it off met with such decided opposition that I have resolved to let Johanna go alone. Such a blow goes beyond the reach of human consolation; and yet it is a natural desire to be near those we love in their sorrow, and to lament with them. It is the only thing we can do. A heavier affliction could scarcely have befallen you. To lose such an amiable and thriving child in such a way, and to bury along with him all those hopes, the realisation of which was to be the joy of your old age—this will be a sorrow as long as you live. I feel it with deep and painful sympathy. We are

powerless and helpless in God's mighty hand, as far as He will not Himself help us, and we can do nothing but bow down in humility under His dispensations. He can take from us all that He gave, and make us utterly desolate, and our mourning over it will be all the bitterer the more we allow it to run to excess in contention and rebellion against His almighty ordinances. Do not muddle your just grief with bitterness and repining, but bring home to yourself the thought that a son and daughter are left to you. In your love for them, and even in the feeling of having possessed another dear child for fifteen years, you must consider yourself blessed in comparison with the many who have never had children nor known a parent's joys. I do not want to trouble you with feeble grounds for consolation, but only to tell you how, as friend and brother, I feel your suffering like my own, and am moved by it to the very core. How all the small cares and vexations which every day accompany our life vanish at the iron appearance of real misfortune! I feel like so many reproaches every recollection of the way in which I have complained and murmured in vain longings, forgetting how much blessing God gives us, and how in the midst of danger we escape unharmed! We are not to attach ourselves to this world, and regard it as our home. Another twenty or at most another thirty years, and we shall both be beyond the cares of life, and our children, having reached our present standpoint, will find with astonishment that their newly-begun life is already going down hill. It would not be worth while to dress and undress if life ended all. Do you still remember those words of a fellow-traveller from Stolpemünde? The thought that death is the transition to another life will certainly alleviate your grief, keen though it be when you think that your beloved son might have been a true and dear companion to you during the time you were still living in this world, and might

have continued, by God's blessing, the memory of you here. The circle of those whom we love contracts itself, and receives no increase till we have grandchildren. At our time of life we form no fresh friendships which are capable of replacing those that disappear. Let us therefore keep the closer together in love, until death also separates us from one another, as it now separates your son from us. Who knows how soon the separation will come?"

The note of interrogation above, proves, for the second time, that in spite of Bismarck's extraordinary foresight, he never anticipated that longevity which he has been privileged to enjoy.

The climate, however, being unsuitable to the Prussian Ambassador, he was stricken with a serious illness, which he did not easily get over. Humorous even in his sufferings, he remarked to someone who showed great anxiety about his illness, that "all the Prussian representatives in Russia either died or went mad."

The diplomatist, although deploring his unsettled life, and declaring that a removal is a half-death, had in his mind the idea of a new appointment in London, Paris, or Berlin. He wrote to his sister that he intended drinking a bottle of champagne the day he received his nomination for Paris. This expectation he was privileged to realise in the month of May 1862.

CHAPTER V

Bismarck at Paris in 1862—The German Embassy—Opinion on the Physical Qualities of the French Emperor and Empress—New Fit of Home-sickness—Bismarck feels lonely in Paris—Driving through the Bois de Boulogne and to St. Germain—Guizot's Opinion of Bismarck—Inscriptions in an Album—Bismarck recalled to Berlin and appointed President of the Council—Gormandising, Shooting, and Hard Work!—A Price set upon Count Bismarck's Head—The Criminal Attempt of the Student Blind—Bismarck is Photographed in the Company of a Prima Donna—His Remorse and Repentance—Sadowa—A Stealthy Thrust—Bismarck's Political Triumphs—Napoleon III. declares War with Prussia.

During a brief stay in Paris in 1857, Bismarck writes to his sister from Dover Hotel:

"I have five fireplaces, and still feel cold; five clocks going, yet never know how late it is; eleven large looking-glasses, but my necktie is always awry."

The Prussian Ambassador seems to be no more contented with the Embassy in 1862. The house, although nicely situated, is dark, damp, and cold. He writes to his wife:

"The sunny side is taken up with staircases and *non-valeurs*, every room looks towards the north, and is pervaded by the smell of sewers and of dry-rot. Not a single piece of furniture is uncovered, and there is no nook where one would care to sit. Three-quarters of the house

JOHANNA VON PUTTKAMMER, THE WIFE OF BISMARCK.

is locked up, and, without greatly upsetting all the arrangements, is not available for use. The maids sleep on the third storey, the children on the second; the first floor contains, besides the bedroom, with its huge bed, one old-fashioned drawing-room after another in the style of 1818, with many staircases and anterooms. The actual dwelling-rooms are on the ground floor, looking to the north, next to the garden, in which I warm myself when the sun shines—at the most only a few hours three times a week. You see it all in the margin. (Here follows a plan of the house.)

"Besides this, on the entire first floor there is only one bedroom. All our home life must be lived on the second storey. The stairs are so narrow, dark, and steep, that I cannot pass on account of my broad shoulders, even though I don't wear a crinoline! The main staircase goes only as far as the first floor, but to make up for it there are three ladder-like stairs at both ends of the house, which reach to the top. It was in this way that Hatzfeld and Pourtalès existed here, but they died in the prime of life; and if I stay in the house, I also shall die before I want to. I would not care to live in it free of charge, if only on account of the smell."

When the newly-appointed Ambassador presented his credentials to the French Emperor, the latter received him with kindness. A Court carriage drawn by six horses had been sent to meet His Excellency, though, indeed, this was but an official formality usual in such cases.

Bismarck thinks that the Emperor has grown a little fatter and stouter, but not as much as the caricaturists make out. The Empress is somewhat stouter too, but, in spite of St. Petersburg, she is still one of the most beautiful women of Bismarck's acquaintance.

Meanwhile His Excellency, full of mental anxieties, is

possessed with a deep yearning for occupation, a state of mind which he has not experienced for a long time. In a letter which betrays his depressed spirits, he laments the incessant rainfall his solitary repasts and the absence of friendly entertainers. He writes:

"In the middle of this huge Paris, I am more lonely than you are at Reinfeld, and am sitting here like a rat in a deserted house. My only pleasure has been to dismiss my cook on account of overcharges, in spite of my indulgence on this point."

And, looking out for an opportunity to introduce Prussian politics, he adds:

"I sometimes dine in a café. How long it is going to last, God knows! In eight or ten days I shall probably receive a telegraphic summons to Berlin, and then it will all be over with music and dancing."

In short, Bismarck's moral barometer, like the meteorological chart, indicates bad weather. The cheerfulness which has hitherto characterised the fine writer with whom we have been acquainted, forsakes him; and not until there is a change in the atmospheric conditions, and Bismarck had returned from London—a visit which caused him to appreciate Paris—do we find him resuming his accustomed tone. On the 14th July he writes:

"We have had fine weather since yesterday, but before that it was miserably cold, and raining eternally. I took advantage of yesterday to dine at St. Germain; a beautiful wood, two versts long, with a terrace overlooking the Seine, and a charming view over woods, mountains, towns, and villages—almost everything in foliage as far as Paris. I

have just had a drive in the softest moonlight, through the Bois de Boulogne; thousands of carriages passing; sheets of water, with many coloured lights; afterwards a concert in the open air; and now I am off to bed."

The Prussian Ambassador remained in Paris sufficiently long to afford Napoleon the opportunity to utter in decided tones the truest words that ever passed his lips: "Bismarck is not a serious man." Would to God he had treated the diplomatist accordingly, instead of inaugurating with him, as he did, the "politics of corruption," as Bismarck himself called them.

M. Guizot, however, was not in sympathy with Napoleon in his opinion of Bismarck, for we find, in an article of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1866, the following words, which are as true as Napoleon's:

"At the present time there is only one bold and ambitious man in Europe, and his name is Bismarck."

This proves once again that, with regard to such a complex character, the most divergent opinions and contradictory judgments may be reconciled.

While we are citing aphorisms, it might be well to quote a reflection penned by the Prussian Ambassador at Paris, which leads us to think that at that time he had already a somewhat burdened conscience. Bismarck's colleague, Count Enzenberg, chargé d'affaires of Hesse, was a great collector of autographs, and had an album in which political personages were invited to inscribe some extempore lines. Anecdotal history has taken from this book a page containing the three following inscriptions, written one below the other:

"Pendant ma longue carrière, j'ai appris à pardonner beaucoup et souvent, mais je n'ai rien oublié.

"GUIZOT."

"Un peu de manque de mémoire ne peut pas nuire à la sincérité du pardon. THIERS."

"So far as I am concerned, life has taught me to forgive much, but to seek forgiveness still more.

"VON BISMARCK."

Four months after his arrival at Paris, Bismarck was recalled to Berlin, where the bad weather he had foreseen had arrived. The Prince-Royal of Prussia, who had by this time ascended the throne, encountered the resistance of the Chamber on the question of military reorganisation. After the retirement of the Ministry, the King called to his aid the man who was in truth *plus Royaliste que le Roi*, the implacable enemy of all parliamentary liberties, whose iron hand was to subdue the Chamber, the country, and the whole of Germany by might (which is stronger than right), the man who, prior to his departure for Russia, spoke of healing all the infirmities of the Confederation by fire and sword.

From the time of Bismarck's appointment as President of the Ministry he was a brilliant political star, shining with increasing brightness, not without danger to the peace of Germany.

At Berlin, the new President, happy to find himself at last in his element, settles down very comfortably. He is proud to have the opportunity of standing at the King's right hand, ever ready to fight on behalf of his royal master.

Then, foreseeing the arduous work which is in store for him, like a true apostle of the maxim, *Mens sana in corpore sano*, he thinks solely of maintaining his bodily strength and indulging his epicurean palate. On the 10th October, three weeks after he arrived at Berlin, he writes to his sister:

"I never ate such good black puddings, and seldom

better sausages. Blest be the masterpieces of your kitchen! I have been breakfasting three days on them! Rimpe, the cook, has arrived, and I dine alone at home, when not at His Majesty's table. I had a good time of it in Paris. At Letzlingen I shot a stag, a wild boar, four fallow-bucks, five smaller ones, and four head of fallow-deer, and shot badly into the bargain, although not quite so badly as my neighbours. But the load of work here grows from day to day. To-day, from 8 to 11, diplomacy; from 11 to 2.30, various disputes involving ministerial councils; then till 4, personal report to the King; from 4.15 to 4.45, a gallop in the rain as far as the Hippodrome; at 5, dinner at the Palace; from 7 till the present hour of 10, work of all kinds. But I've good health, good sleep—and a good thirst!"

It would be unfair to Bismarck did we not here point out that henceforth the man who will be at the head of Prussian politics, and will lead the country into war, will do so at his own proper peril. In truth, the Prussianiser of Germany is already decidedly unpopular: and in the year 1866, at the time of the Sadowa campaign, the intense hatred towards Bismarck has grown to such an extent, that a German newspaper inserted an advertisement in which a certain Dr. Hundegger offered a reward of *one hundred florins to the soldier who would secure the person of Count Bismarck, dead or alive.*[1]

In this identical year (May 1866) a student of the name of Blind attempted to take the life of the man who was the centre of so much hatred. As Bismarck was leaving the Royal Palace on crossing the avenue of Unter-den-Linden, he heard the report of a pistol behind him, and as he turned round this was followed by three other

[1] This title was given to Bismarck after the Convention of Gastein, August 1865.

shots, the last of which grazed his shoulder. At that moment, however, the Minister was able to take a firm grip of his aggressor's wrist, and succeeded in keeping him prisoner till the arrival of the police.

The student Blind then avowed that he had simply done the deed in order to save Germany, by taking the life of the *instigator of fratricidal war*. A few days after, he committed suicide while in his prison, and the minds of the Germans were then so excited, that the wives of high functionaries carried flowers to lay on the criminal's grave.

We shall close this chapter with an amusing anecdote, illustrated by a photograph which we reproduce, and associated with Bismarck's various sojourns at Gastein for the negotiation of the Convention which was to decide the question of the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg.

One day, when the President was taking a walk in the Gastein Park, he met the celebrated prima donna, Pauline Lucca (Countess Rahden).

"You look very miserable," said the lady.

"You cannot always be cheerful," was the reply; "and for my part, I have no reason to be so now."

"Well, come with me and have your photograph taken," suggested the actress. "That will cheer you up for a moment."

Bismarck accepted the invitation, and this is the origin of a photograph on which Bismarck has inscribed these words: "Life is earnest, Art is gay," and which exists at Friedrichsruh. The application of the words (if there be any) we fail to grasp.

This photograph, as one can easily imagine, much scandalised the people of Germany.

To his friend André de Roman, who reproached him with his unseemly conduct, Bismarck replied in a long and

extremely ironical homily, from which the following passage is quoted:

"Countess Rahden is a lady to whom objectionable conduct has never been imputed any more than it has to me. But, notwithstanding that, had I, in a calm moment, reflected on the annoyance which this frolic was likely to give my faithful friends, I should have stepped back from the range of the lens that was directed at us.

. . . .

"But from your friendship and your own Christian principles, I expect that on future occasions you will recommend to my censors the practice of prudence and charity. We all have need of them. Though among the full number of those sinners who come short of the glory of God, I hope that His mercy will not take away even from me, among the doubts and dangers of my career, the staff of humble belief by which I endeavour to find my way."

BISMARCK AND PAULINE LUCCA (ISCHL, 1865).

The war for which Bismarck had been preparing the way for many years broke out at last, and the victory of Sadowa consecrated his political triumphs. Clad in the uniform of the Landwehr cuirassier, he went through the entire campaign by the King's side. In this con-

BISMARCK IN HIS STUDY.

nection his biographers relate a very characteristic anecdote.

"At Sadowa the King was standing exposed to a frightfull shell-fire, and Bismarck begged His Majesty to move on farther. But the King declared that it was his duty

to be in the midst of the battle. The position, however, becoming untenable, Bismarck again urged him to move, arguing that, being himself the Chief Minister, he was responsible for the Sovereign, and had a right to prevent him from risking his life unnecessarily. This argument proved successful, for the King yielded to Bismarck's entreaty and retreated slowly. This tardy movement did not suit Bismarck, who determined to have his own way in the matter, and had recourse to stratagem. He drew his foot from the stirrup, and, edging up towards the King, gave his chestnut horse a good sly kick with the point of the spur, at which the animal made a bound forward to a spot less directly in the line of fire."

An hour later the trumpets sounded the victory.

The political events which marked the following years, involving the fatal Franco-German war, are not our province; therefore we shall only give a summary of them. To the opinion expressed by Napoleon, "Bismarck is not a serious man," the latter replied that Napoleon was a sentimental fool! This retort was very true, for ever since 1866 we see Napoleon, who has grown dull and sleepy in his old age, committing mistake upon mistake, and falling into all the snares prepared for him by the Prussian politician. However, the Emperor realised when it was too late that in allowing Austria to be crushed by Prussia he had made a great mistake, and he now offered the latter an offensive and defensive alliance for the relinquishment of Luxembourg and Palatinate But Bismarck had no interest in concluding this alliance, for he felt that, if the unity of Germany was to be achieved, a war with France was inevitable, as this would gather the Northern and Southern States under the standard of the Fatherland. He continued to oppose the Emperor's claims in the dilatory way characteristic of him, which met with the usual success, while in an

underhand manner he secured the neutrality of Austria and Italy.

In the meantime, Napoleon, allured by the partial victory of the evacuation of Luxembourg, compromised himself still more. With regard to the Schleswig business he remained silent, went so far as to advise Prussia to annex Saxony, and finally committed the only mistake which remained to be committed, by assuming the responsibility for a declaration of war with Prussia. Bismarck got him to do this by putting forward the claim of a Hohenzollern to the throne of Spain.

How conciliatory the King of Prussia was is well known to us. As a matter of fact, this claim was immediately withdrawn, at the request of M. de Gramont, acting in the name of the French Emperor.

Napoleon, persuaded by the people about him who desired war, thought it necessary to demand some security for the future, and entrusted M. Benedetti, who was then at Ems, to go in person to the King and demand his assurance. The latter evaded the interview solicited by the French Ambassador, by saying that he had nothing further to say on the subject.

Bismarck, altering and amplifying the telegram which had been sent from Ems with the King's decision, transmitted it to the various Foreign Offices. This affair, though in itself of no importance, as it was handled by him, seemed a humiliating check to France. Napoleon, feeling he could not draw back, declared war with Prussia.

CHAPTER VI

The Hereditary Enemy—With God's Help Bismarck in the Campaign—The Cause of his Sleepless Nights—The Chancellor's Collaborators—Antagonism between the Chancellor and his Staff—Bismarck's Opinion of the German Generals—The Chancellor's Strategy—The Capitulation of Sedan, as related by Bismarck—The Humorous Diplomatist outwitted by a Bavarian Fusilier.

THE time is nearing when Bismarck will at last be afforded the satisfaction of displaying the hatred which he has long borne towards France and her people. This hostility arises from the dissimilarities between the heavy dull Prussian soldier and the light gay *troupier* of France, which have created between the Teutons and Gauls an historical and ethnical abyss that nothing can overcome. It is nourished in an intellectual and physical antagonism towards French courtesy, refinement of mind, and ingenuity, all of which Germans fail to appreciate, and which Bismarck himself has called "mere hypocrisy and envy."

Although Bismarck cannot be considered the direct instigator of the war, the crafty diplomatist prepared the way, and did all in his power to promote it. Since 1867, he has held in his hands the chief pieces of the European political chess board; therefore the entire responsibility of the state of affairs must necessarily devolve on him. It is with a light heart, then, that he leaves Varzin, his new property, which he acquired in 1867, on his return from a visit to the International Exhibition, where he had seized

the opportunity of bowing and cringing to the Emperor at the Tuileries.

The die is cast The faithful feudalist will follow his master, and will not appear in Berlin till he has firmly placed the imperial crown on William's head; meanwhile sincerely believing himself to be playing a providential part and to be acting by virtue of a special decree from God!

Indeed, it is *with God's help* that he displays throughout the length and breadth of crushed France, the cuirassier's uniform (white cap, top-boots, and blue tunic with yellow collar); *with God's help* that he gives Strasburg to fire and sword; *with God's help* that he showers his offensive puns and Berlin jokes upon the vanquished; *with God's help* that he shows himself implacable to Jules Favre, whose grief appears to him to be feigned; and *with God's help* that he will crown his efforts, by founding the German Empire on the ruins of the Germanic Confederation.

In very truth one wonders at finding a man so highly intelligent, perceiving the finger of Providence in a series of phenomena so contrary to the principles of Christianity and even to the laws of evolution—which have decreed that every epoch of mere militarism shall coincide with a general decay of civilisation.

This affectation of religious fatalism may be only an unconscious form of the superstitious spirit which accompanies genius, or rather, it may be a reflex of Bismarckian humour, of that irrepressible *gambolling* nature common to great men and great dogs!

Throughout this terrible campaign the Iron Chancellor of the future remained in the breach, sharing his master's fatigue, without showing the slightest anxiety or discontent—although the first encampments were lacking in comfort. As a matter of fact, they were obliged, by means

of some odd utensils, to improvise a table at which Bismarck took his meals, and executed the affairs of Europe under the flickering light of a candle, fixed in the neck of a champagne bottle, while a mattress laid on the floor served for a bed. Requiring but little sleep, he sits up to a late hour, and compels his secretaries and staff to keep him company. The truth is, that his sleeplessness is due to overeating rather than to the worry of war. Bismarck's vice of intemperance, which in the course of some six years will carry him to the brink of death, is proved by his own words, uttered at Versailles, "There is always one course too many. When I have made up my mind to hurt my stomach with duck and olives, there is still some Reinfield ham which I must eat, were it only not to waste my portion, since I have to pay for it, and then there is some Varzin boar into the bargain!"

But we must not anticipate. Bismarck commenced the campaign with a regular staff of secretaries and counsellors, forming a somewhat heterogeneous retinue, composed of noblemen like Baron von Holstein: ancient revolutionists such as Lothar Bucher: and retired pastors like Maurice Busch—diverse elements out of which the Chancellor's *savoir faire* had succeeded in forming one entire body. They slept under his roof, and sat at his table whenever circumstances permitted.

Bismarck's uniform throughout the campaign was that of a Colonel of the Yellow Cuirassiers of the Landwehr. When he appeared on the battle-field he was provided with a field-glass, and stood on the lookout armed with a sword or a revolver. With regard to his decorations, he usually wore the Cross of the Commander of the Red Eagle, to which he later added that of the Iron Cross.

Throughout the campaign Bismarck showed himself to be courageous and self-sacrificing, if not a model of sobriety.

"During the journey we generally drove close behind the King's carriage. We started about ten in the morning, and usually accomplished nearly forty English miles a day. On arriving at our quarters for the night, we at once established a bureau, in which work was seldom wanting, especially when the field-telegraph reached us. By its

THE CHURCH OF SCHÖNHAUSEN.

means the Chancellor again became—as indeed he always was at this time, with brief interruptions—the centre of the civilised world of Europe. Even when we halted for one night, restlessly active himself, he kept all about him in constant employment till quite late."

Orderlies came and went, couriers arrived with letters and telegrams, and were immediately sent off again.

THE CHANCELLOR'S BEDROOM.

According to the directions of the chief, the counsellors prepared notes and orders; the clerks copied and registered, ciphered and deciphered—all executed, it appears, in perfect silence, and with a wonderful calmness and rapidity, which presented a striking contrast to the excitement and disorder which prevailed at the headquarters of the German army, and, alas, at the French headquarters too.

Meanwhile serious active opposition broke out between the civil and the military quarters. The latter strongly objected to the disguises adopted by those who directed Foreign Affairs, above all to the uniforms of Bismarck, of Keudell, and of Bismarck-Bohlen, which were respectively those of the Yellow Cuirassiers, Blue Cuirassiers, and the King's Dragoons. Other conflicts were the outcome of a lurking rivalry between the diplomatic and the military departments, the latter going as far as to refuse the Chancellor the communication of some despatches. On arriving at the halting places the officers would appropriate the best rooms, utterly disregarding the gentlemen of the Foreign Office. And, incredible as it may seem, when Verdun surrendered, the treaty of capitulation was not submitted to the Chancellor, who later on said that "it contained an absurdity, in consequence."

A similar proceeding occurred regarding the victory of Le Mans, the knowledge of which he obtained by a note which was pencilled by the King, the staff having neglected to acquaint him of the event. Bismarck complained severely of such flagrant carelessness, and would say again and again, "What ingratitude!" and "How dare they treat me so, after my having invariably defended the interests of the army in the Reichstag? But 'those who live longest will see the most.' I shall leave them in the lurch some day, and they will see the soldier that I have been returning to Germany as a parliamentarian. Yes,

indeed, I am capable of going and sitting on at the Extreme Left!"

During the siege of Paris, Germany appeared to accuse Bismarck of protracting matters. This he stoutly refuted, considering himself, on the contrary, a victim to the delay and the subterfuge of the army. As everyone knows, Bismarck desired strongly to hasten the bombardment, for he was anxious to get it over. Therefore the severity and sarcasm which he directed against the staff were in a way very natural and easily explained.

He informs us that Moltke was all-absorbed with the idea of a struggle with France, and to such a degree that, throughout the Hohenzollern business, he seemed to grow younger or older, according as the turn of events were for or against the war.

In Bismarck's opinion, General Steinmetz's only thought was to shed blood; and at Gravelotte he said, "General Steinmetz took a gross advantage of the bravery of our troops." And regarding the battle at Metz, "Our great loss of men is due to the jealousy of our generals."

General Budrizki, who at the battle of Bourget marched at the head of his troops, flag in hand, he sarcastically compared to the well-known silhouette of an upholsterer of Berlin, named Hittl, and he concluded by saying, "A general's place is not at the head of his troops, neither is he an ornament, but it is his part to act as superintendent and leader."

At Ferrières he remarked, "More than one of our generals took advantage of our soldiers' devotedness, in order to attribute the victory to themselves. After all, the scoundrels of the staff may be right, when they say that if the five hundred thousand men we have in France at this time were destroyed it would be but our stake, and that it matters not whether they be saved or lost as long as we

gain the victory. But to simply take the bull by the horns like this is a very easy kind of strategy."

Bismarck, as you perceive, does not lose the opportunity of criticising the tactics of his rivals. He goes so far as to deny them credit for fighting on the days they had fixed on, remarking that the battle of Gravelotte, which was fixed for the 29th of August, took place sooner, merely through the whim of the outposts.

It is obvious that Bismarck is envious of the part which Blucher and Bonaparte played, when he exclaims, "Ah! I wish I were a real officer, then by this time I should be at the head of an army, and we should not be before Paris."

At Commercy, Bismarck makes his own plan of campaign, a plan that possesses him so much that he goes straightway and informs the King of it. The latter approves it, on the foolish pretext that it was the scheme adopted in 1814. It consists simply in reconnoitring the line of march by means of cavalry, and in searching the country to left and right with infantry. These elementary notions cannot have raised Bismarck's strategic reputation much in the eyes of the German staff!

At Sedan he conducted the parley relating to the terms of surrender, and the account of it which he gave to the faithful Busch runs as follows:

"After the battle of the 1st of September I went with Marshal von Moltke to Donchéry, in order to commence the negotiations with the French, and there we passed the night, while the King and the headquarters staff returned to Vendresse. The conference was prolonged to midnight, when it was adjourned. General Blumenthal, with three or four staff officers, von Moltke, and myself, had taken part in the parley. De Wimpfen spoke on behalf of the French. Von Moltke's terms were simple: the whole French army should surrender unconditionally as prisoners

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
NOTTINGHAM.

of war. General de Wimpfen pleaded for some mitigation of Moltke's terms, as the army was worthy of a better fate, on account of its bravery. He requested that it should be set free, on the condition that it went to Algeria or any part of France that we should determine, so that it would be unable to serve against us during the campaign. Von Moltke, however, rigidly maintained the conditions, in spite of de Wimpfen's insistence on his own unfortunate situation. Only two days previously, the latter, coming from Africa, had joined the troops, and had taken the command, in succession to Marshal de MacMahon, who had received a wound; and now the newly appointed commander was called upon to sign a most disgraceful capitulation! Von Moltke expressed his regret at being unable to take into consideration the general's position, although he fully appreciated the circumstances in which he was placed. He acknowledged the valour displayed by the French troops, but declared that Sedan could not be successfully defended, and that a passage through our lines was impossible. He added that he had no objection to one of the general's aides-de-camp coming to take a survey of our positions, so as to convince himself of the truth.

"Thereupon General de Wimpfen brought forward the political side of the question, saying that, from that point of view, discretion advised us to grant him the best conditions, as we could not but wish for a speedy and solid peace, which could only be secured by our showing great magnanimity; but by sparing the army we should gain its gratitude and that of the entire nation, creating everywhere friendly feeling; whereas the contrary decision would be the germ from which would spring endless warfare.

"Thereupon (since the reply to this argument was within my province) I replied to this effect: 'One may rely on the gratitude of a prince, but not on that of a nation; and where the French in particular are concerned,

gratitude is less certain than from other nations. In France there is no settled constitution or form of government: the succession of dynasties and governments is ceaseless, and therefore the fulfilment of promises is not to be expected. In consideration of this state of affairs, it would indeed be madness on our part not to take the best advantage of our present success. The French are a jealous and envious people. The victory of Koniggrätz has wounded them, and they have never forgiven us for it, although it did not in the least diminish their own greatness. How, then, could any generosity of ours induce them to forget Sedan?'

"General de Wimpfen did not yield: he affirmed that the character of the French people had greatly changed of late. 'France,' he said, 'has under the Empire learnt to think of peace rather than of military glory. She is ready to proclaim the fraternity of nations,' etc. etc. It was easy for me to prove to him the contrary, and to show him that, in granting his demand, I should prolong rather than conclude the war. I wound up by saying that we should maintain our claims.

"General Castlenau then declared, in the name of his sovereign, that the French Emperor had, on the previous day, placed his sword in the King's hand for the sole purpose of obtaining an honourable peace. 'Whose sword was it?' said I, 'the sword of France, or that of the Emperor?' He replied, 'The sword of the Emperor.' 'Well, then,' declared Marshal von Moltke quickly, 'there can be no question of further conditions,' and a smile of satisfaction lighted up his face. General Wimpfen resumed: 'Very well, if this is the case, on the morrow we shall engage in conflict once more.' 'I shall open fire at four o'clock,' was Marshal Von Moltke's reply. Thereupon the French prepared to retire, but I decided to remain so that they might think over it. Finally, they requested that the armistice might be prolonged, in order to discuss

our claims with the generals at Sedan. To this von Moltke at first refused to consent, but he yielded, through my pointing out that a delay could by no means be injurious to us.

"The following morning, at six o'clock, General Reille brought a message that the Emperor desired an interview. I dressed myself and went on horseback in the direction of Sedan, where I expected to find the Emperor, but I came upon him on the Fresnais road, at a distance of three miles from Donchéry, driving in a carriage and pair, in which were three officers, with the same number on horseback by his side. I only recognised Reille, Castelnau, Moskowa and Jaubert. A revolver was in my belt, and the Emperor's eyes rested on it."

Here follows a remark to the detriment of Napoleon, an expression which, to say the least, is scarcely parliamentary. Busch apologises for it.

"I gave him a military salute, and he acknowledged it by raising his cap, while the officers followed suit; thereupon I also took off mine, though contrary to military regulation, and was met by a command from Napoleon to keep my hat on. I treated him precisely as I used to do at Saint Cloud, and asked for his orders. He replied that he wished to have an interview with the King. I was especially desirous that this should not take place before the terms of the capitulation were settled, and accordingly told him that it was impossible for him to see His Majesty, the royal quarters being situated eight miles away. I found that he had no intention of returning to Sedan, for on receiving my answer he asked whether His Majesty had not appointed a place for him to stay. The fact is that he feared some unpleasantness might befall him."

The Emperor still insisted upon seeing the King, and Bismarck at last consented to escort him to the Chateau

de Bellevue, near Fresnais, where the interview took place. But Bismarck had taken thorough precautions that the two sovereigns should not meet until the terms of capitulation had been settled by Marshal von Moltke, for, said he, "military men can always be harder on these questions."

During the triumphant march through burnt, plundered, and ruined France, Bismarck had occasion to remark that the country-women were just as ugly as they were at the time of his diplomatic tours. "I cannot understand," said he to Herr Busch, "how it is that the Parisian women are so pretty, while the country-folk are so exceedingly plain. It must be that the handsome ones come to Paris in order to barter their beauty."

Our hero's *bon-mots* at Versailles have been chronicled by Busch; some of them we shall shortly reproduce.

We shall close this chapter by relating a thoroughly humorous incident, which reflects credit on a Prussian private soldier, who succeeded in getting the better of the Chancellor's desire to hoax folk.

Bismarck had been entrusted by the King to give the Cross to a Bavarian fusilier, whose heroism had caused him to be severely wounded. He went to the wounded man with the express purpose of playing a trick on him. Said he to the soldier, "The King has requested me to present you with this Cross or with a hundred thalers, whichever you prefer."

The poor fellow was disconcerted, and looked doubtfully at the Chancellor, whose stern features never relaxed. Then he made up his mind to ask Bismarck the following question:

"What is the Cross worth?"

"About seventy-five thalers," replied Bismarck.

The man, after reflecting a moment, answered very quietly—

"Well, give me the Cross and twenty-five thalers besides. That will make it right."

The Chancellor confessed himself beaten, acquiesced in the soldier's proposal, and straightway gave an account of the episode to the King, who was highly amused.

THE BISMARCK COAT OF ARMS.

CHAPTER VII

The Chancellor's Office at Versailles—Discussion on Gastronomy—Arsène Houssayé's *Bon-mot*—The Best of Slops—Bacchanalian Exploits of the Cuirassier-Diplomat—Berlin Jokes—The "Menu of Foreign Affairs"—A Well-watched House—National Industry of Prussia—Ingenuous Prussian Correspondent—How History is Written—Bismarck in a Dressing-Gown—The Miscellaneous Column of the *Nouvelliste de Berlin*.

AFTER a series of overwhelming victories, the Prussians, whose headquarters are established at Versailles, surround Paris, and the private mansion of Madame de Jessé—No. 12 Rue de Provence—is converted into a Chancellor's office. No more uncomfortable apartments and unpalatable meals! Indeed, cookery has become the chief concern of Bismarck's comrades. The head of the culinary department is a private soldier of the company, whose well-prepared dishes prompts Herr Busch's remark: "One whose stomach is accustomed to plain living must do such a cook justice, and declare that he transports one into the bosom of Abraham." Herr Busch's enthusiasm may be attributed in some measure to the delicious wines (champagne at every meal), which apparently proved very agreeable to this gentleman's taste. The repasts were generally rendered pleasant by *bon-mots*, jests, political arguments and gastronomical discussions, which have been carefully recorded by Busch. At Ferrières, in the luxurious dining-room of Rothschild's castle, Bismarck discourses at great length on fish, seizing the opportunity of recommending the excellent trout of the Varzin ponds. In passing, he speaks of his partiality for

salt herrings. Fortunately for him, this liking, a few years later, was the means of saving his life, as we shall see in the pages devoted to Friedrichsruh.

He also confesses a weakness for fried oysters: this, in my opinion, is treason to gastronomy.

The subject of mushrooms was introduced, whereat Bismarck commenced to expatiate on the various kinds which grow in the north, showing that the husbandman within him was still alive. Then followed a peroration on fruits, when he confessed to be extremely partial to cherries, prunes, and all wild fruits, especially bilberries and blackberries, which are very plentiful in Germany. On another occasion, while arguing on wines, beers, and spirits, the ex-Chancellor, although a heavy drinker, deplored the abuse of them which is so prevalent in Germany, declaring that the excessive use of these intoxicants is the ruin of all energy and intellectual capabilities, besides being the cause of all the idle political public-house talk. Truly this statement could not have proved very gratifying to the Chancellor's fellow-countrymen, although Bismarck went on to say that his opinion was based on a Prussian proverb which says, "Red wine for children, champagne for men, brandy for generals." As a matter of fact, the latter is the Chancellor's favourite stimulant, taken with Rhine wine and champagne, which, like General Moltke, he mixes with tea and sherry. Bismarck is a genuine supporter of a drinking Diplomatic Service, just as Talleyrand was. In this matter the present Chancellor does not equal his predecessor.

It is said that Arsène Houssaye recommended champagne as a first-rate remedy in case of illness. Bismarck shared this opinion with him. He said that after excessive fatigue he had proved champagne very beneficial. On one occasion, when the King and suite were entertained at dinner by the officers of the regiment, an enormous boot-

shaped goblet, filled to the brim with champagne, was offered to Bismarck, – the officers meanwhile delighting in the idea of seeing the diplomatist intoxicated,—a pleasure which they failed to realise.

The Chancellor, holding his breath, raised the vessel to his lips, and drank its contents at one draught; then, to the great surprise and disappointment of the officers, his request for another was denied him, owing to the King's word of disapproval.

These table-talks were not merely restricted to the science of gastronomy. The Chancellor would jumble up all kinds of topics in the most peculiar manner. Sometimes he would predict, as the result of his victories, the transformation of a part of France into a German colony—with a population of ten millions—a kind of neutral territory without an army, from which Germany would think it enough to increase her revenue by raising taxes. Or, instead of this, he would give a humorous account of his feelings during that dreadful *tête-à-tête* with Napoleon III. in the fisherman's hut at Donchéry, declaring them to be similar to those one might experience at a ball (after requesting a young lady's company for a dance) on finding oneself utterly unable to converse, and heartily wishing to be rid of the fair companion.

At this time, too, he gives vent to some more or less facetious comments respecting the French race.

"Scratch the Frenchman and you find the *Turk*. The French nation is a crowd lacking in individuality, and should therefore be regarded as a mass. There are in France thirty millions of obedient subjects, totally devoid of personality and character; and who, as long as our unity has not been accomplished, have been easily able, acting as one body, to crush us all down." "The Parisians," he continues, "with their superstitions, form a section that in France stands aloof. Their conceptions, though sacred

to them, are narrow, and, when closely examined, are seen to be but idle words and shallow sentiment."

On meeting Jules Favre again at Ferrières, four months after the negotiations, Bismarck noticed that he had grown grey and corpulent, and said that, no doubt, it was the result of eating horse-flesh! And again, when the same gentleman complained of the Germans firing at the hospital of the Quinze-Vingts,[1] he made the reply—

THE VILLA HOLLANDIA AT GASTEIN, WHERE BISMARCK LIVED WHEN TAKING THE WATERS.

"Why not? The French have never spared our vigorous and healthy people!"

On another occasion, when Jules Favre was remarking on the smartness of the women and children on the Boulevards, Bismarck replied in pretended astonishment—

"Why! I thought you had eaten them all."

When peasants were burnt alive in their houses, he

[1] Institution for the Blind.

analysed the odour floating through the village, and said that "it was like the smell of cooked onions."

Having once invited a royal prince to dinner, Bismarck remarked to him, when he was surprised at the menu, comprising liver-pie, poultry, and exquisite wines, all of which had been provided by the Foreign Office, "that the North Federation had determined to have a fat Chancellor." For the reader's edification, we here produce the menu of 23rd December, which Busch has given:

Onion Soup	Port Wine
Fillet of Boar	Tivoli Beer
Irish Stew	Iced Champagne
Roast Turkey	and
Chestnuts	Burgundy *ad lib.*

One can see from the foregoing that Bismarck had found a good substitute for the truffles of which in 1856 he declared he had grown tired.

To Madame de Jessé, the proprietress of the house he occupied on the Rue de Provence, he remarked, on leaving, that he would gladly have eaten her guinea-fowls' eggs, but no doubt her patriotic hens were too obstinate to lay any during his stay in the house! We shall now cite from M. Delerot's book, *Versailles pendant l'occupation*, a few lines concerning the mansion which became for a few months "the diplomatic centre of Europe," or, as Herr Busch said with some exaggeration, "the centre of civilised Europe." This dwelling was situated in a somewhat out-of-the-way street, which was quite detached from the neighbouring houses, and therefore offered the exceptional security for which Bismarck was seeking. For greater safety some of the Chancellor's agents were sent to occupy the surrounding houses. The one opposite remained untenanted, and the owners of the next were compelled to barricade the narrow windows

which overlooked the garden of the Jessé mansion, and, moreover, to have a policeman within. In a word, the entire street became the property of the Chancellor, and so beyond the reach of any who might entertain plans against him. Throughout the afternoon constables paced up and down the street, and were stationed at the doors of the hotel.

THE CASTLE OF VARZIN.

From the time of his arrival Bismarck showed his anxiety to protect the future Chancellor of the German Empire from the danger to which he was exposed, on account of both the French and his own countrymen. A flag, made of shabby-looking white calico, was attached to a rough branch, and was flying in front of the hotel. This standard bore the inscription: "Office of the Chancellor of the Federation."

Everybody is acquainted with Mirabeau's utterance—

"War is the national industry of Prussia."

Bismarck had constituted himself the very soul of that industry.

THE OLD EMPEROR AND HIS CHANCELLOR (AFTER THE PICTURE OF SIEMENROTH).

He organised and superintended everything, stooping to the most trivial details of the management, not only of Jessé House but its branch establishment at Berlin. Never was the Chancellor's superhuman ability to execute any kind of work—whether it be that of production, assimilation, or criticism, whether it be in the accomplishment of the most difficult task or in the solution of the most difficult problem—more remarkable than at this time.

This aptitude was all the more wonderful, seeing that he could scarcely sleep sufficiently to keep up the wear and tear of such a life. We have already mentioned Bismarck's sleeplessness and the very vulgar cause of it, but as he has himself confessed about the subject, it would be ungracious on our part to insist. As the Chancellor did not retire till late, even in time of war, he seldom rose very early in the morning (ten o'clock generally), unless a battle was anticipated, in which case he was up at daybreak. At Versailles it was his custom to read, take notes, interview his subordinates and distribute the work among them, at the commencement of the day, all this sometimes while he was still in bed. Afterwards, he would take a cup of tea and one or two eggs, before beginning to write or dictate. This first meal was the only one till the enormous evening repast, which finished with tea between nine and ten o'clock. In the afternoon Bismarck would receive visitors, hold audiences, give his report to the King, and supervise the dispatching of telegrams and press communications.

At three o'clock he usually indulged in a rest, or a ride on horseback, after which he resumed his work until dinner, which was served between five and six. On leaving the table, he immediately got into harness again; thus we see that the interval spent at the table was the only pleasurable hour of the day. It was indeed a time of

expansion and intellectual relaxation, during which predominated the natural Germanic element, inclined to facetious outbursts and rather coarse jests, mingled with a few more agreeable witticisms. At twelve o'clock, in quiet times, the works were closed and the fire extinguished, although the Chief sat up later, his busy brain fabricating fresh legislation and pondering in the silence of the night its diplomatic energy. No correspondence of any kind escaped his eyes: the secretary or journalist who had the misfortune to commit errors or to publish facts which displeased the Chancellor, was to be pitied. At Clermonten-Argonne he went so far as to suppress the correspondence of Louis Schneider, the King's historiographer and a great favourite with royalty, on the ground of his over-zeal. The incident is worth telling about, and we shall here reproduce the words of the German publicist himself.

"As luck would have it, I met Count Bismarck in the street at Clermont. He addressed me with his usual frankness, informing me that complaints of the incorrectness I had committed had reached him from Berlin; that he had in consequence given orders that my articles should be rejected, and that this command could not be withdrawn. Had he been aware that I was to be the victim, he might have acted otherwise, but what was done could not be undone, and things must now run their course. There might, however, be some means of putting things right: this was by submitting my contributions to an officer of the General's staff for revision."

The journalist accepted the conditions, but he soon realised that such a course would be impossible, as it would delay his work and thus render it valueless, since it would be forestalled by private correspondence and independent reporters. "In addition," he observed, "if one has to avoid censure when writing, one must of necessity

grow cold and colourless; indeed, such a task would be impossible for a writer who has any true sense of his dignity"—and immediately the good German adds, with a candour which is akin to want of consciousness, "Anyhow, I will turn to my task zealously and copy each article to be submitted for revision."

Now that we have seen Bismarck's interference with press communications, let us notice the Chancellor's opinion on a similar proceeding, when he believes it to be the work of an enemy.

"I have always blamed the system by which the press circulates false statements, which was much abused by the Empire, and which is still continued by your new Republic." (It is the Mayor of Versailles that he is speaking to.) "I might furnish you with proofs from the accounts of a battle which took place recently at Le Hay. I can produce the reports and official documents with regard to the loss sustained. On a certain area of the battlefield, at the only spot where the projectiles thrown by your forts fell on being spent, the dead of both French and Germans was gathered up by our troops. There were more than four hundred and fifty French and only eighty-five Germans, as may be easily accounted for, seeing that our troops were sheltered by, and fired from behind, an embattled wall, while your soldiers were completely unprotected. I am not here mentioning the loss caused by our artillery, whose well-known precision of aim you have experienced, a loss which has been estimated to equal the above, at the very least. This, however, we are unable to verify, seeing that these bodies that had been fired at from a distance had fallen too near your forts for us to remove them. So, let us say, nine hundred French against eighty-five Germans. Well, your newspapers stated about four hundred French disabled, and over five hundred Germans!" The comical part of it all is, that official documents, since published in

Germany, estimate the real loss of the Germans at Le Hay as four hundred men!

To M. Delerot—author of *Versailles pendant l'occupation*—we owe a very curious portrait of Bismarck in a dressing-gown. The Chancellor was seated at a bureau, which was strewn with a collection of papers recently sent from Paris. He was wrapped in a long silk gown, and, at the conclusion of the interview, he apologised for the slovenliness of his attire. The half-open gown allowed his military uniform to be seen. On the chest of drawers a revolver lay, and on the mantelpiece a kind of helmet, over which was a cover, and this last Bismarck lifted again and again while conversing. In justice to Bismarck, we must add that he had just been seized with a fit of gout, which, in his own opinion, was highly detrimental to the campaign.

His twofold character of diplomatist and soldier by no means lessened his keen solicitude with respect to the Berlin newspapers. During one of his interviews with the Mayor of Versailles, he remarked to the latter, "It is incredible to what extent the Imperial Government is corrupted. The documents which have been found at the Tuileries speak volumes on this record, and many leaders of the Liberal Democratic party are terribly compromised. I must contribute something concerning it to our Journal." As a matter of fact, a series of articles, which issued from the Chancellor's office, under the heading of "Miscellaneous," and dealt with some extracts of papers that had been stolen at the Tuileries, were inserted in *Nouvelliste de Berlin*.

CHAPTER VIII

Comte d'Hérisson's Journal—Bismarck overwhelmed with Eulogies—Comte d'Hérisson misled—Further Table-talk—Bismarck and Rothschild's Steward—A little Impartiality required—Theory about Cigars—Bismarck and Garibaldi—Witty but Vague—Chancellor's little Present—The Diplomat's Decorations—Prussians leave Versailles—Madame de Jessé's Guinea-fowls—The Romance of a Clock—Parallel between Stage Scenery and History—Bucolic—Bismarck has the Last Word.

All the negotiations relating to the truce took place at Madame de Jessé's house. Jules Favre, who negotiated this settlement with Bismarck, was usually accompanied by M. Comte d'Hérisson, an officer of the staff.

This latter, whom Bismarck once invited to dine with him, has bequeathed to us, in his *Journal d'un Officier d'ordonnance*, some very curious impressions, which are worth reading.

His praises of Bismarck's attitude at Versailles are too profuse. We believe that everything has its limits; in extolling such a man as Bismarck, one runs the risk of bringing upon oneself the contempt of him who is lauded, as well as misdirecting public opinion. For instance, M. d'Hérisson begins thus: "If I were to believe in three-quarters of the French publications with regard to the war, in the newspapers, and in the public opinion based on them, I should think that the Prussian Chancellor assumed with his master the *rôle* of a Richelieu, under whose yoke everyone yielded, who ruled absolutely, and to whom one had to account for everything. Moreover, I

should think him an iron man, determined to attain success at any cost, and to take all possible advantage of the victory which has signalised our downfall. Nothing, it seems, would satisfy his desires; he would not care a pin about Europe; and, having determined on his destiny, he would not stop till he reached his goal."

Nothing could be more false than this conception. But, on the other hand, there could not be a greater fallacy than the contrary idea of M. d'Hérisson, who represents Bismarck as a man to whom his religious patriotism and humanity dictate an exceptional moderation, mingled with a keen anxiety to shorten the evils of the war. In fact, Bismarck is not so religious as M. d'Hérisson would like us to believe. It is true that Herr Busch tells us he found in the Chancellor's room at Versailles some devotional books—probably sent to him by his wife—and he also informs us that Bismarck partook of the sacrament before going forth to the battlefield; but these facts prove nothing.

COUNT HERBERT BISMARCK, THE CHANCELLOR'S ELDEST SON.

To the Iron Chancellor religion is, above all, a matter of sentiment, and it is his principle not to mingle sentiment with war. During hostilities, he several times declared, "What we have got to do is to ask ourselves whether it is to our interest or not to crush our adversaries."

Well, it was the interest of Germany to subdue France, *but not at her own expense*. However, the chances of bloodshed are often ill to calculate, and Bismarck knew full well that he alone was responsible toward the whole German nation for the German blood that might be spilt. Hence his conciliatory tendency, his constant care to spare the lives of Prussian soldiers, his fervent wish to secure a conclusion of the war, and, later, his wrath at the resistance of Paris, and at the delays of Jules Favre and Thiers. This is diplomacy, and not humanity, which apparently M. d'Hérisson does not seem to realise. He, on the contrary, takes for sincere the reply made by Bismarck to Jules Favre, when he asked him whether "he was not afraid to exasperate the resistance of the Parisians." "You speak of your resistance, and are proud of it. Well, sir, I must tell you, that if M. Trochu were a German, I should have him shot this very night. Listen! God and humanity forbid him to expose, as he does, upwards of two millions of people to the horrors of famine, and this out of sheer vanity. The railway lines are cut everywhere, and if we do not succeed in re-establishing them within two days, which is far from certain, one hundred thousand women will die of starvation in Paris every day. Don't speak of your resistance! It is a crime!" On the same day they had begun to discuss the amount of the war indemnity, and Bismarck declared laughingly that "Paris was such a great lady, that it would be quite inconsistent to ask for her ransom less than a thousand millions." He consented, however, to settle the matter for two hundred millions.

The dinner-hour had arrived, and the Chancellor's table was laid to accommodate these gentlemen. Jules Favre, however, declined the honour, and dined alone, elsewhere. Bismarck, who occupied the middle of the table, seated the French officer on his right hand, and the latter,

not having the same scruples as Jules Favre, took the place assigned to him among the well-dressed Prussian officers, who were the master's customary guests.

"I remember," says M. d'Hérisson, "that the table was very smartly decorated and covered with shelves, which were taken from a campaign dressing-case."

The room was lighted by two candles, stuck in the necks of some empty bottles, and was the only thing that reminded one of a camp. No sooner was the Chancellor seated than he began to eat as if he had an enormous appetite, drinking huge quantities of beer from a silver tumbler, on which his monogram was engraved. Everyone spoke in French. All at once the conversation grew very lively. As usual, Bismarck spoke ill of the proprietor and steward of Ferrières (among others), and of the Jews in general, for the Chancellor professed not to have the slightest esteem for the nation. It seems proper to insert here, in parenthesis, the cause of the ill-will between Bismarck and Rothschilds.

During his stay at Ferrières the steward refused wine to Bismarck, although he had been told that all such requisitions would be paid for. Summoned before the Chancellor, the transgressor began by saying that he had no wine at all, only to contradict himself the next minute by mentioning that he had some Bordeaux. At this Bismarck became furious, and stormed at the unfortunate man, declaring that such a rude fellow was unfit to occupy a castle which the King had honoured with his presence.

"Do you know what a *strohbund* is?" he demanded.

As the man remained speechless, Bismarck went on to explain that it was a bundle of straw on which in Germany deceitful stewards were laid, in a position that enabled one to give them a good thrashing. Bismarck never went short of wine in future. After Comte d'Hérisson, whose task it was to convert the terrible Cuirassier Diplomatist to

his own way of thinking, had displayed all his Parisian wit and brilliancy, and had succeeded in charming Bismarck, negotiations with Jules Favre were resumed with much calmness and dignity.

Comte d'Hérisson relates the following:

"The Chancellor declared his wishes with admirable logic. He went straight to the point, and, in doing so, continually provoked Jules Favre, who had been accustomed to diplomatic dealings and lawyer-like artifices, and did not understand a sincerity lacking in controversial quibbles. The Chancellor expressed himself in French with a facility which I had never before met with in Prussia, for the Prussians, whose native tongue is hard, learn every other language except French very readily.

"Bismarck's language was eloquent and forcible, and he always hit on the word which most adequately conveyed his thoughts or most fitly described a situation.

"While I was drawing from the ministerial portfolio the necessary documents, and the notes which had been dictated to me, I received an unexpected lesson in rhetoric and conversation."

It may appear odd that, in a report written by an officer of the French staff, so much good should be attributed to Bismarck and so little to Jules Favre, who is represented as a crafty and designing individual. The so-called rhetoric lesson with which Comte d'Hérisson was entertained began with some subtle theories about cigars and the art of smoking. Bismarck had offered a havana to Jules Favre, and upon his declining it he remarked—

"You are wrong, then. When one has to start on a conversation which may involve discussion and violent argument, it is always advisable to smoke. When smoking, you know," he added, lighting his havana, "the physical movements are in some degree paralysed by the cigar

which one holds, and, without interfering with the mental faculties, it proves soothing, by slightly dulling the mind. This blue smoke which arises in spiral form, and the windings of which one's eye follows with delight, causes one to be more conciliatory. One feels happy, the eye is engaged, the hand is retained, and the sense of smell is gratified,—all of which disposes one to make mutual concessions. By not smoking you have one advantage over yourself —you are more alert: but, on the other hand, you are also at a disadvantage—you are tempted to be violent, and to yield to your first impulse."

These last words Bismarck said with a suspicion of raillery. We agreed with M. d'Hérisson, that the sentiments are those of an inveterate smoker—one who enjoys a good digestion, too. Unfortunately, Bismarck belied his own theory by flying into a passionate temper. It happened in this way. Bismarck wanted to exclude Garibaldi from the truce, in order to have his revenge against the Italians on account of their ingratitude.

"The Chancellor's eyes flashed," said Comte d'Hérisson, "and displayed a perfectly savage wrath. He shouted aloud, 'I must have my revenge. I intend to take Garibaldi throughout Berlin with a placard fastened to his back bearing the inscription, "Behold the ingratitude of Italy!" How dare they, after all that we have done for them? It is abominable.'" At that moment a bright idea struck Comte d'Hérisson. "I thought I might possibly succeed, so I took the liberty," he says, "of doing a rather bold thing with such a distinguished man as Bismarck. I took up the cigar box, and, making a slight but respectful bow, held it out to him." He remained silent for a minute, then, his anger having subsided, he said, "You are right, Captain; it is quite unnecessary to get angry. It does no good, but just the reverse." Garibaldi and his small army were therefore included in the truce, and the French have

to congratulate Jules Favre for insisting on the point, for the Italian patriot well deserved it. Till the suspension of hostilities, the Versailles house kept up inside as well as out the appearance of a quiet and modest home. Except once—it was at Christmas—when Bismarck, like a true German, could not help feasting. The traditional tree, adorned with candles, was set up at the Chancellor's house, and the

THE CASTLE OF FRIEDRICHSRUH.

whole household, including children, servants, and hall porter, were admitted to take part in the merry-making. Cigars and toys were plentiful. Bismarck had just received his own Christmas box, for the King had conferred on him the Order of the Iron Cross. In future this Cross was the only one he wore, as in the Berlin Chamber he had never displayed aught but the humble medal which was presented to him for saving the life of Hildebrand, his groom. It is

said that to a medical doctor, who had asked curiously about the little ribbon, Bismarck haughtily replied—

"Why, everyone has his own weaknesses, and one of mine is to save a man's life now and then."

The German historiographers however, attributed to Bismarck a much less peaceable reply, when questioned another time on the subject of his external decorations. During a military review, contrary to his custom, he had thought fit to display his diplomatic Stars on his Landwehr uniform. An Austrian general approached and asked if he had gained all his Stars and Stripes in front of the enemy.

The question, whether sarcastic or genuine, displeased the Chancellor, who looked the Austrian officer full in the face, and answered, "Yes, Your Excellency all before the enemy—here at Frankfort."

After the preliminaries of peace were signed, the laborious removal of the Chancellor's office began. Here for the last time, as it is a question of facts, I shall quote M. Delerot.

Bismarck, on the eve of his departure, 6th March, sent for Madame de Jessé, and prevailed on her to visit the house, insisting on the care he had taken, and on the fact that the place was in no way damaged. "I respected everything," said he, "even your guinea-fowls." But as the guinea-fowls were not to be found anywhere, the cook had to confess that they had been served up to His Excellency.

The survey of the mansion was enlivened by the Chancellor's pleasant and courteous talk. Suddenly Madame de Jessé noticed the disappearance of a marble clock, ornamented by a bronze statuette representing "A Winged Satan." Bismarck explained that he had had it removed to his study. The clock, in fact, was there at that moment. The Prince said to Madame de Jessé—

FIELD-MARSHAL VON MOLTKE.

"Thiers detested the clock. We used to discuss in front of it at some length, but he could never look at it, and would always repeat, 'Satan! curse him!' . . . It was, however, under his wings that we signed the peace. By the way, do you value the clock much?' On receiving a reply in the affirmative, Bismarck allowed the matter to drop. When the visit was over, bareheaded he accompanied the proprietress as far as the Boulevards, after the manner of a perfect gentleman.

I shall now quote M. Delerot's words:

"Madame, we should have much pleasure in presenting Herr von Bismarck with this clock," said one of the staff. "His Excellency would very much like to take it home with him as a memento. Will you kindly sell it to us, whatever the cost might be, provided it be not one million?" he added smilingly. "We would gladly pay for it."

Madame de Jessé declined. Fresh offers were made to her the following day by the Chancellor's secretaries. The lady refused more stoutly than ever, saying, "No! I am French. I wish neither to give it away, nor to sell it." At about nine o'clock, when Bismarck appeared on the steps, ready to seat himself in the travelling carriage, Madame de Jessé was standing a short distance away. The Chancellor pretended not to see her. He said "Good-bye" to the gardener, shaking him by the hand, and gave him fifty francs, to which he added other forty, saying, "This will do for repairing the house. Madame de Jessé will have reason to be satisfied."

As those who were witnessing the scene were not diplomatic enough to conceal their joy at the visitor's departure, the latter turned round and remarked in a half-serious, half-joking tone, "How delighted everyone is to see my heels!" Then, holding out to the gardener's wife a scrap of paper on which his Berlin address was written, he said to her, "Should Madame de Jessé change

her mind with regard to the clock, here is my address." And with that he went.

A few minutes after Bismarck's departure, Madame de Jessé stated that a roll of four hundred francs, also some jewels, and a collection of rare coins, had disappeared from the secretaire in a private room which only officers had entered. Later on, it was discovered that the pendulum of the famous clock was gone too. Probably one of the officers had taken it. Not being at liberty to offer von Bismarck the whole clock, he must have given him the pendulum, which had marked the seconds so precisely, and which had been cursed by M. Thiers. The clock was still pointing to the hour at which Bismarck left Versailles, for the pendulum had not been replaced.

PRINCE VON HOHENLOHE.

As an accurate historian, we deemed it proper to complete our information about Versailles by paying a visit to Madame de Jessé's son. We found him a stiff gentleman, who seemed more anxious "to cultivate his garden" than to help in a minute inquiry about the historical house that has fallen into his possession. Such members of society imagine that all their contemporaries share their own disdain for the annals of the past. And so M. de Jessé contented him-

self by telling us that no trace of Bismarck's visit remained.

The furniture had been renewed, except the clock, which, however, no longer marks the hour of Bismarck's departure. This proves once again that history is like stage scenery, and must not be examined too closely.

We have just been seeing how Bismarck behaved as a warrior. Herr Busch will show us the great Master of the Versailles State Factory haunted, in spite of all, by a dream, which he has himself related in the following terms:

"Last night, for the first time for a long period, I had a good sleep. Generally I keep awake, my brain being assailed by all kinds of anxieties. Varzin presents itself very vividly, and in the minutest detail, as a vast landscape, with its colours, its green trees, its rays of sunshine in the blue sky, against which each tree stands out separately. It is in vain to attempt to get rid of the impression, until I drive it off by notes, reports, despatches, etc., and at last, at the dawn of day, sleep comes."

At this same time Bismarck made the following sardonic remark about the inhabitants of the suburbs returning home after the capitulation: "On my way to St. Cloud in the afternoon," he related at table, "I met many people carrying kitchen utensils and bedding. The women looked pleasant, but the men had no sooner taken notice of our uniforms than they assumed angry countenances and heroic attitudes. It reminded me of a command which used to exist in the Neapolitan army, '*Faccia feroce*,' or, 'Make your faces fierce,' instead of saying, 'Shoulder arms.' With French people all is pompous and imposing, as the stage."

It was a strange thing that this man, so gifted with a keen perception of other people's weaknesses, and such a perfect diplomatist when sheltered from the fire of the foe,

never understood the ridicule he brought on himself by indulging in military humbug. He went the length of serving throughout the campaign in full uniform, and refused to put on the civilian's dress till the day following that on which the preliminaries of peace were signed.

The story of the "Mote and the Beam" once more!

CHAPTER IX

Bismarck as Landed Proprietor—Friedrichsruh—The Chancellor's Scepticism—His Literary Tastes and Opinions—Bismarck as an Orator—How he behaved at the Sittings of the Reichstag—Eloquence and Liquor—A Jest about Alsace-Lorraine—"I fear God, dear Abner; other Fear I have None"—"Might masters Right."

At the end of the year 1871, Bismarck, who had been now made a Prince, had reached the very height of his political career. One can understand the pride he experienced when he looked back at the distance he had travelled since 1866. The Chancellor of the new German Empire found himself, in spite of his political foes, the most popular man in the whole of Germany. At the same time he was one of the richest landed proprietors in the country. To his estates of Schonhausen and Varzin—the latter bought with £60,000 which the Emperor had given him for his share in the war with Austria—had just been added that of Friedrichsruh. This cost more than £100,000, which was deducted by the Emperor from the £200,000,000 paid by France.

Truth to tell, all this greatness did not dazzle overmuch the plain and natural man that Bismarck has always shown himself. A sufficient proof of this is the opinion expressed about him at this time by the friend of his youth, John Lothrop Motley. The following extract is from a letter of Motley's to his wife, dated July the 25th, 1872:

"To my surprise, I found Bismarck but little changed in appearance since 1864. He has grown stouter; his

features have altered a little, but are as striking and display as much energy as ever. Madame Bismarck has changed even less than her husband during the fourteen years since I saw her last. Marie is a delightful young girl, with ringlets and grey eyes—simple, modest, and brave-hearted, like her father and mother.

AT KISSINGEN: WAITING FOR BISMARCK.

"On rising from table Bismarck took a walk with me in the forest. It was made pleasant by his frank and hearty talk, full of interesting comment on the events of the bygone terrible years. He spoke of them without affectation, as ordinary folk speak of the little incidents of their everyday life.

"In the evening we found many people assembled,

some drinking tea, some beer, and others Seltzer. Bismarck smoked his pipe. When I used to know him he smoked the strongest cigars, but now, he tells me, he couldn't smoke a cigar to save his life, he has conceived such a dislike for them.

"He said, among other things, that ever since his youth he thought himself a man with a very sound view of affairs, but all the same it was his firm conviction that no one could control destiny, and that no one, therefore, was really great and powerful. He cannot help laughing when he hears vaunts about his wisdom, his prescience, and his mastery over the world's destinies. He said that a man in his position was very unlike the timid run of folks who were afraid to prophesy whether it would be a rainy or sunny day to-morrow. He had to pronounce boldly, 'To-morrow it will rain—or it will be fine weather,' and then he had to do everything he could to bring his prophecy about. If it proved correct, the whole world cried out, 'What wisdom! what a prophetic gift!' If it proved otherwise, all the old wives were after him with their besom handles! And so, he says, life has taught him to be modest, if it has taught him nothing else."

The years immediately following are to be reckoned among the busiest in Bismarck's career, in parliamentary work no less than in diplomacy. By the unanimous opinion of Germany itself, Bismarck is not an orator in the strict sense of the term. Indeed, he is well aware himself that eloquence is not his strong point. He makes the clever excuse that an orator is above all things a poet and an artist, and that the qualities which make the artist and those which make the politician are quite incompatible. Bismarck is not an artist in any sense of the term. He has scarcely any love for music, and is entirely indifferent to painting. For example, as he himself relates in one of his

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

private letters, it was entirely owing to accident that he paid his one and only visit to the Museum of Painting at Berlin.

As for literature, Bismarck cares for nothing but novels. This might be considered a mark of inferior intellect, had not Bismarck declared that he has no time for profounder books, and seeks in novels nothing but amusement for the passing hour. Previous to 1870 our diplomatist had a distinct liking for French novels, especially those of Feydeau and the two Dumas. He carried them about with him on all his travels, and even in his campaigns. The day before the battle of Sadowa he wrote to his wife to send him some French novels, and indeed it seems as if he could think of nothing else on which to nourish his imagination. Later, when the vogue of the realistic school was at its height, he was devoted to Flaubert, Zola, and Goncourt, because, as he said, they depicted in superior fashion the corrupted morals of the French nation. An English writer, who had the good fortune to interview the Chancellor at this time, writes as follows:

"He smoked the whole time, and invited me to do the same; and every now and again he poured out beer for himself in a jug standing at his elbow. By his side there was stacked a pile of yellow-backed French novels. When we had done discussing the matter which had procured me an audience, the Prince asked me what French novels I liked best. Thereupon he launched into a dissertation upon French literature, which showed that he had a good knowledge of it.

"I was struck by the readiness with which he accepted the portraits of those novelists who depict the ugliest features in French social life, as a faithful picture of the country's morals. He thinks French society rotten to the core, and is incapable of doing justice to any of the Frenchman's better qualities. He asserts, with his usual

brusquerie, that the French have always been inclined to fling dirt at themselves, and that writers like Zola and the younger Dumas, when accused of going too far, maintain that they have not exaggerated in their books.

"I remarked that, so far as that went, if you judged Englishmen by some of their sensational novels, you might fancy English society a mass of thieves, forgers, and vagabonds.

"Thereupon Bismarck—with the courtesy for which he is famous!—'The truth is that robbery is the national vice of the English; . . . but it does not produce atrophy in the race, as does the French people's folly of allowing themselves to be governed by their women.'"

One need not insist on the incompetence for literature and psychology displayed by the man who is content to rest on such arguments.

It was owing to Bismarck's inferiority as a speaker that in the latter years of his career he made few speeches and came as seldom as possible to the Reichstag. Indeed, the Chancellor never appeared unless he was called on to defend the fundamental principles of his policy, for example, the necessity for seven years' military service.

As we are unable, from our own observation, to give a portrait of Bismarck at the rostrum, we reproduce here a few passages from an article which Herr Th. Zolling contributed to the *Neue Freie Presse* in 1887:

"The Chancellor allows the representatives to go on talking without interruption. Meanwhile he swallows a perfectly incredible quantity of water, with which he mixes a few drops of cognac.

". . . From time to time he plays with an opera-glass of very ancient make—it's of horn—which is placed in front of him, and at intervals he scans the benches. But that does not prevent him from giving his ear to the

speeches, nor from taking notes with a pencil. And what a pencil! — it's the kind of thing one doesn't see every day! It is yellow, and of tremendous length. I have been told that regularly after every sitting the pencils disappear, being carried off by the deputies, who send them to their wives as relics of Bismarck. . . .

"Now the Chancellor makes a sign to an attendant. The latter brings a large portfolio of black leather, which he places on his master's knees.

"Bismarck takes a bunch of keys from his pocket, opens the portfolio, and draws out two bundles of papers, one red, the other blue; these latter are all the notes of importance. He turns it over, places before him the paper which he needs, and looks at his watch, for the babbler who is speaking shows no sign of coming to a stop, and the Chancellor is beginning to get impatient.

"At last his turn has come.

"He rises slowly, and one experiences a kind of awe at seeing this Hercules tower up above the table — so tall is he that his hands do not touch the latter. His body, sensible that a support is to be had there, moves up and down. His arms swing right and left. His hands, the only thing about him that shows his great age, tremble more and more, and, seeking for something to hold on to, fumble nervously about his moustache, his ear, his coat, and often grasp the Iron Cross, the only decoration which the Chancellor wears. At other times he places his hand in the back pocket of his coat, draws out his handkerchief, and blows his nose loudly."

Speaking of his voice, the German journalist says:

"You expect to hear a kind of thunder issue from that enormous chest, but, instead of that, it is a baritone which is very soft and agreeable to begin with, and then, after several fits of coughing, becomes somewhat stronger.

"There is nothing dignified in his mode of speaking,

and no appeal is made to the feelings. You might say he was conversing, as in a *salon*, to the deputies nearest him, and that his words could not carry to the benches."

A Reichstag reporter, who has published his memoirs, expresses a somewhat similar opinion.

"No one could say that Prince Bismarck was an orator. You are astonished at seeing this man, of a height much above the common, with a voice exactly like a woman's.

"His voice is especially feeble when he is suffering from his nervous complaint. On such occasions you can only hear him with difficulty, and the thin-issuing sound is, moreover, interrupted from time to time by a most violent cough. After these attacks you hear nothing but occasional passages,—indeed, it is no longer a speech. He is completely master of what he says, and I've pretty often had the idea that his cough was simply a kind of oratorical device, by the help of which he was able to assemble his ideas and produce a striking effect.

"He will begin, for example, by an expression which is somewhat rude and coarse, and everybody expects it to be followed by another that is even worse. Nothing of the kind. The little cough comes in, and, after it, a phrase nobody could have looked for. Here, for example, is one of these changes in his method of speaking—which I give from memory.

"'I am devoted to the Emperor's service. I am perfectly indifferent whether I perish at my task or no, and you' (here came the little cough) —'you, I daresay, are perfectly indifferent too.'

"Everybody had expected some violent insult to be uttered; but no—the little fit of coughing had changed the course of his ideas.

"Meanwhile" (continues Herr Zolling) "Deputy Richter, the pet aversion of Bismarck, mounts the tribune in his

turn. In appearance he is very like Emile Zola. Not very handsome to look at, but an easy and elegant speaker.

"While the Liberal deputy is speaking, Bismarck seems a prey to the most lively emotion. He changes colour; first he is very pale, then his face becomes crimson. His eyes seem about to start from his head, and then the light in them is clouded. His hands grasp his pencil convulsively, and from time to time he makes hurried notes on his paper. At times he tries to take part in the general hilarity, but his laugh has something forced and strident.

". . . All at once he leaps up in the midst of the tumult that has been caused by Richter's speech. He plucks at the flaps of his coat as if to make it come off, just as a man might who was preparing for a hand-to-hand conflict. His chest heaves violently, and you would think he had great difficulty in breathing.

"But, while he regards the audience and measures his opponent with his eyes, he has time to become master of himself. His humour suddenly changes. Gaiety gets the upper hand once more, and a laugh lights up his face. He has regained complete possession of himself, and he answers his adversary in a sportive tone, trying to turn him into ridicule. Every dart is well aimed; every blow tells. . . . The oratorical duel ends in the midst of general laughter."

Let us note, in passing, that all the time he is speaking, Bismarck helps himself to huge bumpers of brandy and water, very carefully mixed and prepared by a group of friends, chief among whom is his son, Count Herbert Bismarck. At important sittings the Ministers themselves superintend the giving of the dose.

When the mixture is ready, the whole group taste it. Some find it too strong; quick—one drinks a little, and another adds some water. Those who come next think it

too weak; quick—in goes a little brandy. And these gentlemen discharge their duties so conscientiously that they do not notice the repeated appeals of the Chancellor, who has been making signs that his glass is empty long ago.

If we may believe M. de Blowitz, Bismarck drank, during the sitting of February the 6th, 1888, eighteen glasses of his favourite mixture!

Being quite consistent in his aversion to mere word-combats, Bismarck has a horror of grand oratorical effects. And he has no greater liking for orators themselves; "for," says he, "it is the smallest fault in a man of too fluent utterance — the making of speeches at too great length and too often." Indeed, all biographers of the Chancellor are compelled to state that for the most part (instead of listening to Deputy Richter, as Herr Zolling has said) Bismarck disappears from sight and does not come back again till his persistent enemy has left the tribune. The Chancellor, who was often reproached for this weakness, used to excuse himself by saying that the personality and the oratorical violence of Herr Richter affected him unbearably, because of an aversion he couldn't get the better of!

COUNT WILLIAM BISMARCK: THE CHANCELLOR'S YOUNGER SON.

The truth, we believe, is, that the feudal spirit of the Chancellor cannot endure to hear liberty mentioned before

it: the symbolic "Watch-dog of the State" is afraid that it may be driven wild and begin to bite.

When the deputies of Alsace-Lorraine complained of the exceptional severity meted out to the recently annexed provinces, a severity which is contrary to conscience and the rights of men, Bismarck answered them with his habitual sarcasm—"It was not to secure the happiness of Alsace-Lorraine that we annexed them. . . . We were forced to break off the point of Wissembourg which stuck deeply into our flesh,—and just in this point of Alsace there lives a population (not a whit behind the Gauls in their passion for war) which honours us with a truly cordial hatred."

In short, all that will remain of Bismarck's political speeches will go into a very small compass. One may well smile when one sees the German biographers write with admiration of an oratorical effect which consisted in launching from his place in the Reichstag this defiance in the face of Europe: "We Germans fear God, but nothing else in the world!" (February 6th, 1888). This claptrap is but a vulgar paraphrase of the famous verse of Racine—

"Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte."

With regard to the famous maxim, "Might masters right," which is said to have occurred in his speech of January 27th, 1863, Bismarck has denied its authorship in the following words:

"The orator said that I uttered the words, '*Might masters right.*' I do not remember using such an expression. In spite of the marks of disbelief with which you have received my correction of the error, I appeal to your memories, and if they are as good as mine, they will tell you that what I said was simply this, 'I have advised a compromise, because, without that, conflicts must ensue.

THE WELDER OF GERMAN UNITY (FROM THE PICTURE BY SCHMITT).

Now, conflict is a question of superior power, and as the life of the State must not suffer interruption, the man who sees that he possesses such power sees also that he will be forced to use it.' I did not convey any belief that there was an advantage in doing so. I do not look for an impartial judgment at your hands; I only wish to correct a matter of language which has been misunderstood."

CHAPTER X

Bismarck in 1874—The Chancellor's Palace at Berlin—Humorous Notes about the French and the Germans — A Parliamentary Soirée in 1879—"The Lion grows Old"—The Attempted Assassination at Kissingen—The Arnim Affair—Family Affairs—A Letter of the Chancellor to his Groom's Brother—The Seventieth Birthday of Bismarck—National Subscription Castle of Schonhausen and the French Cannon—Gifts from different Sources—The Year of Sorrow—Bismarck Weeps.

We are indebted to the pen of Maurice Jokaï, the Hungarian novelist, for some notes about Bismarck in the year 1874. The writer had paid him a visit in the Chancellor's palace at Berlin.

"Nothing could be simpler and easier than to obtain an interview with Bismarck in his own house. The palace is the most unpretending in the Wilhelmsstrasse, and there is no towering Swiss at the door with a silver mace in his hand. All you have got to do is just to ring as if you were calling on the newest comer in the neighbourhood. The anteroom is lighted by a single lamp, with very moderate powers of illumination indeed, which is placed on a table. I had to cross two salons ere I reached the cabinet where the Chancellor awaits his guests. The furniture is very modest. In the corner is an iron bedstead, on which a huge St. Bernard was lying, and near the window is a strong box of iron. In the middle is a huge writing-table, before which the Chancellor was seated.

"He made me sit down on the other side of the table, and, opening a drawer, drew out a packet of cigars, which

he offered me to choose from. As I don't smoke, I thanked him and declined. He never smokes cigars himself; he has taken to a huge meerschaum. At that moment a door opened, and the Princess appeared with her daughter. They were going to the Court Ball, and had come to say good-bye to the head of the house. Bismarck embraced them paternally, and instructed his wife to present his respects to their Majesties."

In the course of this interview, Bismarck fired off a few of his usual polite speeches about France. "The French are savages: take away the cook, the tailor, and the hairdresser, and you'll find they're no better than Redskins." It would be curious to imagine what would be left of a Prussian if you took from them the same elements of civilisation—and also those which (according to Mirabeau's jest) constitute their national industry!

One may add that, in the course of the same interview, Bismarck spoke almost as roughly about a considerable section of his own countrymen—those, namely, who emigrate to Russia, or elsewhere.

"I have hunted a great deal in Russia," he said, "and I've often heard a proverb there, to the effect that if a Russian steals he steals sufficient for his daily needs, but if a German steals he steals that his children may have something for to-morrow" (we had a proof of it ourselves in 1870).

This is the place to say something about the parliamentary evenings and *fruschoppen* (beer parties), which are become famous in the history of what may be called the political entertaining of our time. Generally speaking, these were social gatherings, at which the man of iron, laying aside the stiffness of manner proper to the Imperial Chancellor, showed that he was pliable after all, and sought to win over lukewarm and hesitating politicians by a kind of rough and ready affability.

The *früschoppen* especially offered to platonic adversaries like Windhorst a kind of neutral ground where they might meet and discuss things without wishing to bite each other's heads off. The tun of brown Bavarian beer, before which they assembled, used to conciliate the most divergent opinions ere all was over!

It was the same with the parliamentary evenings that used to follow his more private dinners. These were regular "smoking parliaments" (*Tabak-Parlamente*, as the Germans say), which sat till far on in the night. It was there that Bismarck, skilled as he was in light and familiar conversation, made, no doubt, his greatest "oratorical" hits.

A German writer, Herr Fedor de Köppen, gives us a detailed account of one of those evenings—May the 3rd, 1879, at which Bismarck showed himself in his most pleasing mood. We quote here the substance of the narrative.

The Chancellor waits in the yellow salon to receive his guests. His two sons, Herbert and William, help him to do the honours, if the Princess and Countess Marie his daughter do not happen to be present. Countess Marie has become a remarkably fine woman, whose wit and intelligence is the theme of general praise. The guests are immediately introduced into the *salon*, properly so called, where the light of the lamps shows how severe is the Renaissance furniture, and how cold the green tapestry, embroidered with gold, that adorns the walls. Most of the men are in evening dress. Those who are not are in uniform, and it is the latter who squire the ladies, in obedience with the motto, "*Love to the fairest, Honour to the most brave.*"

Bismarck takes his seat at a little ebony table, where he is immediately surrounded. Deputies and politicians afford him a most attentive audience. And the Chancellor begins to chatter away with the ease and freedom

characteristic of his familiar moods, jumping from one subject to another, mixing up politics, sport, hunting, and Heaven knows what beside. A subject which is particularly dear to him, and of which he never tires, is his own childhood and youth, his pranks as a student, his duels, and the number of days in "jail" with which he was favoured at the University of Göttingen.

BISMARCK'S SAW-MILLS AT VARZIN.

All at once a loud report is heard in the neighbouring room. There is a rush, and it is found that a guest who was examining a pistol and handling it carelessly has let it go off. However, nobody was hurt, though the ball grazed a deputy who happened to be there. Bismarck, as soon as he learned the fact, seized a glass, and with a smile asked the guests to drink the health of the deputy

who had escaped so luckily from "the base attempt of fortune."

Deputy Windhorst happened to be present that evening, and Bismarck was particularly amiable to his political opponent. At ten, as usual, a move was made to the buffet, where a plentiful repast was spread, while, in the corner, beneath the leaves of an orange tree, were two

BISMARCK'S PAPER-MILLS AT VARZIN.

tuns of Munich beer (from the Franciscan brewery). Bismarck, who can never resist a pun, points to these barrels with the following words: "Gentlemen, there's a brew I particularly recommend to you. Since the wind has turned, so far as Rome's concerned, the Franciscans send me the best they have got."

Such, in their main details, were the incidents at one

of Bismarck's "evenings,"—incidents which the comic writers of the time used to find good "copy" for the following day.

The truth was, that at that time there was nobody great and grand in the eyes of the Berlin folk, but Bismarck,—and they swore by none but him. His most insignificant doings had an exaggerated importance in their eyes. Fanatical admirers used to follow his carriage, which never went at any speed, through the streets. And though the people might scoff at the old waggon, ill-varnished and upholstered in plain black leather, though they might laugh at the faded blue livery of the coachman, after all it was their Bismarck going by,—whom they were only too proud to greet with a "*Hoch!*"

And the strange thing is, that while his popularity was increasing, his political influence was growing less and less.

The Opposition had become stronger in the Reichstag, and it began to shake the firm foundations of the Colossus of iron. This man, who was approaching his sixtieth year, saw one by one his most intimate political friends fall away from him—Maurice von Blankenbourg himself, and Thadden-Thrigläff, and many another. "The lion grows old," was their cry; "he is losing his teeth." Let a few years pass, let William II. mount the throne, and they will be able to pare his claws!

On the 13th of July 1874, Bismarck, who was taking a course of the waters at Kissingen, in Bavaria, in order to cure his rheumatism, had a miraculous escape from the bullet of a man called Kullmann, who alleged that his object was to punish the author of religious persecution in Germany.[1]

[1] After this attempt, the town of Kissingen erected a statue of iron in his honour, which was unveiled in 1877. Down to the present time the Chancellor has continued to go for his annual cure to Kissingen, just as he used to do. The avenue where the attempt was made has been christened after him.

Everywhere the Opposition began to show itself, which was destined in the end to destroy his supremacy.

He engaged in a conflict with Count Henry von Arnim, the new German Ambassador in Paris, who opposed the views of the Chancellor in the most violent way. The struggle ended in the utter crushing of the unfortunate Arnim, who was condemned by the High Court to six years' imprisonment, for purloining diplomatic documents belonging to the Archives.

In June 1875, the Chancellor retired to Varzin, firmly resolved for a time to have done with European politics. His health had become bad, and it was only by submitting to the regimen prescribed by Professor Schweninger, whom he consulted shortly afterwards, that he was able to triumph over the disease that assailed him. We shall have occasion to refer again to this doctor, who is now one of the most celebrated medical men in Germany.

Worn out by the continual struggles he had to embark in to secure the success of his anti-Liberal ideas,—tired, too, no doubt, by the weight of a career that ran counter to his love of a country life,—he offered the Emperor his resignation as Chancellor. The answer was, "Never!" But this word, which after all has nothing remarkable in itself, was merely flung out for the use of the gallery. As a matter of fact, things seem to have been managed much more simply in private conversation between the two of them: the incident even furnished Bismarck with rather a neat joke. The Emperor, wishing to encourage his old servant, said to him once—

"What? You pretend you're tired, worn-out, too old, and I don't know what besides. . . . Why, look at me; I'm older than you, and yet I mount my steed."

"No doubt, sir," said Bismarck. "But that's quite usual. The rider always lasts longer than his mount."

One of the neatest of the many jests we owe to Bismarck the humorist.

We may mention among the events of the Chancellor's life, in the year 1878, the marriage of his daughter, Countess Marie, with Count Kuno von Rantzau. A year later he had the pleasure of seeing his first grandchild.

With regard to his family in general, about the years 1881 and 1882, we find some information in a letter written at that time (27th December 1881) by the Chancellor to the brother of his old groom, Hildebrand, whose life, you remember, had been saved by Bismarck. Hildebrand had died in America, and his brother, who also was in America, wrote to inform Bismarck of the fact. The reply of the Chancellor is worthy of being reproduced, for it shows in this man of iron (along with the simplicity and ingenuousness we have already seen to be characteristic of his nature) qualities of heart of which he has given little evidence outside the narrow circle of his family:

"My dear Hildebrand,—I have received your letter, and I am glad to learn that you are well, although destiny has afflicted you at times. Your brother was older than I thought. In 1851 your wife was quite a young girl, so she can't be very old. I am pleased to hear that you and she are happy together, and that she still thinks of Germany. Augustus must have become a regular Yankee! As for me, everything goes well, seeing that all my family are living, thank God, and in good health, and that my daughter has presented me with some grandchildren.

"My sons are not yet married, I am sorry to say, but they're well, thank Heaven! Unluckily I can't say the same of my wife, and my own health is not so good as hers even. I never hunt now, and hardly ever cross a horse's back, feeling that I'm too worn-out for that sort of thing.

If I don't make up my mind to take a rest soon, I shall find all my strength gone.

"How old are you, and what is your occupation—that is, if you haven't already retired from business? You can tell your wife that Lauenburg is in the way of prospering. I went back there in the autumn, the first time for thirty years, and the town made me an honorary citizen. In that capacity I send a special greeting to your wife."

The two sons of the Chancellor were summoned in their turn to share in the imperial favour. Count Herbert was made a colonel, and Count Bill a major. Besides, the elder entered the Foreign Office, where he soon reached the rank of Under-Secretary of State. The younger, who had embraced a career in the Civil Administration, was already invested with a kind of prefecture. About the same time the Emperor solemnly conferred on the Soldier-Diplomatist the military Order *pour le mérite*, the only German Order that he did not possess. This raised to eight-and-forty the number of decorations won by the Prince in the course of his career.

Henceforth it seemed as if the popularity of Bismarck grew with the number of his enemies. For his seventieth birthday the people of Berlin organised a huge demonstration,—a regular national festival, in fact, which it was meant should be repeated every succeeding year. The Government itself set the example. The Emperor himself, accompanied by the Princess of the Blood, repaired to the Palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, to congratulate and embrace his old servant. Then Bismarck received the Ministers, the deputies of his party, and deputations from all the trade guilds in Berlin. Among the presents and gifts by which this never-to-be-forgotten birthday of the Chancellor was made memorable—it was not surpassed even by the celebration of 1895—particular mention must be made of

the national subscription, which produced £138,000. With part of this sum the German people bought the ancient domain of Schönhausen, which the Bismarck family had been forced to part with in the time of their difficulties. The remainder, amounting to about a million marks, was sent in specie to the Chancellor, to use in any way he pleased.

This estate of Schonhausen, called the "new domain," is about three times as big as the older estate of the same name, in which Bismarck was born. The castle, which was built in 1734 (as the shield above the great portals informs us), is more elegant than that on the other estate, and in every way more comfortable. The day the Chancellor entered into possession of it he stopped on the threshold, and said, "Here as a boy I have often played with Hedwig at a fine game called "For Life or Death," in which the one who was killed used to go on playing just as gaily as before!"

With his habitual disregard of comfort, Bismarck has never occupied this new residence of his, and at present it has been made into a museum. On his short and infrequent visits to Schonhausen, he always goes to the old home of his family. Here, on a little terrace in front of the house, bordered by lindens a hundred years old, he has planted the five French cannon given to him by William the First, after the war of 1870.

These cannons are—the *Navarino*, made at the Douai arsenal in 1745, and captured at La Fère; the *Ravissant*, made at Douai in 1713, and captured at Soissons.

The gun-carriages of these two pieces of ordnance are adorned by a heraldic sun with scattered rays, enclosing the motto, "*Pluribus nec impar.*"

The others are the *Autorité*, a field-piece cast at Douai in 1856, mounted with the letter N and the imperial crown, which was taken at the surrender of Metz; the *Champion*, a field-piece cast at Strassburg in 1862, taken

in the environs of Paris; and a mitrailleuse, the *Général Malus*, made at Douai in 1866, which also bears the imperial monogram, and which was captured at Sedan.

As for the private gifts received by the Chancellor on this triumphal occasion, it is impossible to enumerate them all. A brewer sent the Prince a cask of Bavarian beer,

THE TERRACE OF SCHÖNHAUSEN, WITH THE FRENCH CANNON CAPTURED IN 1870.

weighing over thirty stone. A member of the nobility, called Edenhofer von Regen, an original no doubt, sent him a huge organ-pipe in *lah* normal, with a letter saying that the Chancellor had never any need of a pitch-pipe to make the European Concert play in tune: however, if he ever did need such a thing, the sender would think himself happy if

BISMARCK AND HIS SON HERBERT (FROM THE PAINTING BY KOPPAY).

his pipe could render him any assistance. Organs, it seems, are instruments in great vogue in music-mad Germany. Bismarck himself, small as is his taste for the arts in general, has, it is said, a great liking for the organ—of the street grinder! So much so, that one day he made a present of one of these instruments to the eldest son of Prince William (the present Emperor). On the following day he happened to be at the Palace, and noticed that the little Prince couldn't turn the handle properly.

BISMARCK (FROM PAINTING BY LENBACH).

"I will show you how to do it," he said, and, stationing himself at the organ, he ground out an air with astonishing skill, while the young princes began to dance among themselves.

Enter Prince William, who stops astonished, and then says with a smile to Bismarck—

"Good! Even the little emperors-to-be have already begun to dance to your music."

The birthday of '85 saw presents of a graver kind than these, though.

From Constantinople came a Turkish sabre encrusted with precious stones. This was a historic weapon, having belonged to Ali Pasha of Janina. On the blade was the following Arab inscription: "Happy is the man who dies by this sword! Death will appear pleasant in his eyes, coming as it does from so perfect a blade." Bismarck laughed at the motto, and declared that, in his opinion, a long life was preferable to the prettiest death by violence. He preferred, therefore, to preserve both his life and the weapon that might rob him thereof.

Some of the Harz folk sent him a huge pipe of delicate workmanship, with a quatrain, wishing that the Chancellor might use it to smoke the tobacco of the German colonies. For quite a long time this was the favourite pipe of the Prince, but one may doubt if he will feel bound to fulfil the wish of the donors. Lastly, Tyras, the famous *Dachshund*, received for his share various collars and hats and a canopy.

The first of April was a day marked by another happy event in the family, for it saw the betrothal of Count William to his cousin Sybille von Arnim, the daughter of Bismarck's sister Malvina, to whom he had addressed so many sprightly and tender epistles. The marriage was celebrated at Kroechlendorf on the 6th of July in the same year. Countess William is now the mother of three children.

The years 1885 and 1887 were marked by a few sensational speeches. The Chancellor hardly ever appeared in the Reichstag, except to defend a military budget or consolidate his scheme of national defence. His holidays he divided between Friedrichsruh, Kissingen, and Varzin.

At the latter he was engaged rebuilding his paper-mill, which had been destroyed by fire.

And now the fatal year of '88 opens before him,—a year of sorrow and affliction, which, in the death of the two first German Emperors, portended his own speedy downfall. The aged William was followed to the tomb in three short months by his son Frederick. On the same day that William the First died (the 9th of March), the Reichstag, which had been summoned immediately, witnessed a strange spectacle,—Bismarck weeping at the tribune.

The Iron Chancellor weeps for his august master, but, subtle diviner that he is, skilled to read the future and interpret the mysterious signs of destiny, perhaps he weeps also for himself and his own life-work.

CHAPTER XI

Court Holy Water — Bismarck made a Doctor of Divinity — Abandoned of the Gods — His "Farewell to Fontainebleau" — His "Good Friends" play the Turncoat — The Emperor's Friendly Move: the Bottle of Steinberger — Triumphal Return to Berlin and a Platonic Reconciliation — The Patriarch at Friedrichsruh — Death of Princess Bismarck — The Eightieth Birthday: a Repetition of the National Festival of 1885 — The Sabre with Bismarck's Expression about "the Fear of God" represents a Sword of Damocles — The Gifts and the Homage of the People.

JUST at first it did not seem as if the accession of William II. would make any difference in the *modus vivendi* of the Iron Chancellor. The young Emperor informed the whole world that he was firmly resolved to show himself the worthy successor of his grandsire. And he took the opportunity presented by New Year's Day of sending to the "dear Prince" his warmest protestations of friendship. He called down on his head all the blessings of Heaven, and hoped, he said, that it would be given to the Prince for many years to come to work with himself for the grandeur and glory of their country.

But Bismarck the diplomatist already detected beneath all these flourishes a man who was going to meet him on his own ground, and with his own weapons — a sovereign who was getting ready to govern by himself, and who nourished, at least, the secret ambition of being his own Chancellor.

As a matter of curiosity, I should mention here, among the unimportant events that are the small change of Bismarck's biography, a fact which borrows from its date

(10th November 1888) a character of prophetic irony. On that date, which is Luther's birthday, the Chancellor received his diploma as Doctor of Divinity from the University of Giessen. This was somewhat too weak a remedy to avert the crisis that was shortly afterwards to reduce the man of the *Kultur-kampf* to the ranks of private life.

And here, by another of fate's ironies, we have Bismarck, self-deceived for the first time in his life in his usual forecast of probabilities, proclaiming his faith in his star when it was just about to sink for ever, when the favour of the gods was leaving him.

In October 1889, at the end of an interview between Bismarck and the Emperor Alexander III. of Russia, the latter said, "I am very willing to trust you and have every confidence in you, but are you sure of keeping your position?"

"Beyond all doubt," said Bismarck. "I'm absolutely sure of it. I shall be Chancellor till I die!"

Two months later he abdicated.

I have used the word "abdicate" advisedly, for the Chancellor's retirement had indeed the same character and excited the same wonder as the abdication of a sovereign. The pretext invented by William the Second was a disagreement between the Chancellor and himself about the meaning of certain articles in the Constitution of 1852.

On the 20th of March 1890, Bismarck felt himself compelled to send in his resignation to the Emperor, although on the 1st of January preceding William had informed the Prince of his undying gratitude, and had prayed fervently that their friendship and work in common might long continue!

Similar protestations marked the letter in which the Emperor accepted the resignation and relieved him of all

his offices. At the same time he created Bismarck Duke of Lauenburg and Lieutenant-General of Horse, with the rank of Field-Marshal.

BISMARCK AFTER HIS DISMISSAL.

On the 26th of March the ex-Chancellor paid his farewells to the Emperor and the Imperial family. The people of Berlin seized the opportunity to give him a

AFTER A FAMILY DINNER.

reception of the most extraordinary character. His landau was beset and literally bombarded with flowers, and at one moment the tumult was such that the horses threatened to run away. Bismarck had to get down from his carriage at the bridge leading to the Imperial Palace.

A few days later the Prince had an interview with his successor, General von Caprivi, and is said to have remarked in French in the course of it, "*Le Roi me reverra*" ("The King will see me again"). This prophecy has not been fulfilled, at least in its minatory sense, and it is only fair to add that Bismarck himself has denied the truth of it in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*.

The Prince was unwilling to leave the capital without paying a last farewell to the tomb of the old Emperor. He went to Charlottenburg and descended into the crypt of the mausoleum, and there he placed flowers on the coffin of the man who, owing to him, became a great and glorious Emperor. This pious journey took place on the 28th of March. On the same day Bismarck bade a solemn farewell to Count von Moltke. At last the actual departure took place in such a hurry, that, according to the statements of the German papers shortly afterwards, the Chancellor had not even time to have his furniture properly removed, and hence lost many articles of value. In short, his departure was not unlike "The Expulsion of a German family from Paris in 1870."[1] An enormous crowd accompanied the landau to the station, and there "*Hoch, hoch!*" the most enthusiastic of all the German cries, was heard again and again, mingled with shouts of "*au revoir*," until the departure of the train for Friedrichsruh. Count Herbert, who since 1885 had served his father as Under-Secretary of State, also resigned his office, in order to accompany the Prince into private life. He thus abandoned, of his own free will, a most brilliant career, for he had been appointed

[1] *Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 1890.

a Prussian Minister in 1888, and everything seemed to indicate the fact that he would some day succeed his father as Imperial Chancellor. Count William, however, kept his post as President of the Regency in Hanover.

And now that the curtain has been drawn upon the public career of Bismarck, it is with a kind of relief that we look forward to the remainder of our task. That task will be less painful now, since it will not have to deal with the recollections, painful to a Frenchman, attaching to the political biography of the Chancellor. It will be confined to a recital of the doings of his private life, which, at least, are quite irreproachable. Among the most characteristic sayings of Bismarck, with regard to his fall from power, we quote the following:

"All my 'good friends' began to breathe again and to hope it had come at last! They couldn't forgive me for having remained in power for eight-and-twenty years! Eight-and-twenty years!—think of it — *quelle insolence!* They ought to have got rid long ago of a man who could be so brazen! And so all who for eight-and-twenty years had hoped, but in vain, to become Prime Minister, all who thought themselves unjustly, slightly, insufficiently appreciated, or badly recompensed,—all those approved of what was done. Heaven only knows how large their number must have become in the course of eight-and-twenty years!"

This immense band of enemies, which had naturally risen in the track of a man who succeeded in all he did, set themselves to aggravate the misunderstanding between Bismarck and his sovereign. They succeeded so well, that two years later, when Count Herbert married the Princess Hoyos at Vienna, the misunderstanding seemed to be entering on an acute stage. The Emperor declared publicly that he did not look upon the marriage with favour; and the Chancellor von Caprivi felt himself compelled to

request Prince von Reuss, the Ambassador at Vienna, to refrain, together with his staff, from any share in the forthcoming ceremony. This decided the Austrian Emperor himself, although he was on the best of terms with Bismarck, not to be present at the marriage, which took place, therefore, quite privately, *à huis clos*, as one of the Chancellor's friends said shortly afterwards.

In spite of his advanced age, Prince Bismarck went with his wife to Vienna for the marriage, and it is to be observed that during the whole journey, both there and back, he received the warmest greetings. The rest of the summer the family passed at Varzin, where Bismarck got the sad tidings of the death of Lothar Bucher, his old friend and fellow-worker.

"All my friends," he is reported to have said on this occasion,—"all my true friends have gone before me to the tomb. Those who pretended that they were my friends are turning away from me."

His words were absolutely true, for it was on the former followers of Bismarck that the Emperor William continued to rely, while it was his former political enemies that persisted in opposing the Government. It was evidently a tardy consciousness of the falseness of this position that determined the young Emperor to take the first steps towards a reconciliation.

It took the sufficiently strange shape of a bottle of old Rhine wine (*Steinberger Kabinet*), which the Emperor sent to the Prince by the young Count von Moltke. I ought to explain that the ex-Chancellor had nearly succumbed to a pneumonia that attacked him during his stay at Kissingen in 1893, and that his tardy convalescence was still attended by the complications consequent upon an influenza, with a recurrence, too, of his old facial neuralgia.

Bismarck had scarcely recovered when he set out for

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

Berlin, in order to thank the Emperor in person—who had, indeed, requested the interview. This gave the people of Berlin a fresh occasion for displaying their devotion to the ex-Chancellor, and this they did in a manner that outshone all their former demonstrations. The people applauded the Sovereign and his old Premier alike, and more than one of Bismarck's followers, witnessing this triumphant restoration to favour, must have anticipated at that time the return of the ex-Chancellor to power.

But it was decreed that all the marks of esteem which the supreme lord of Germany henceforth lavished on the founder of the Empire should be of a purely platonic character. Besides, was not Bismarck too old to resume the reins of the chariot of State which he had once been able to guide with such marvellous skill!

There could be no doubt of it. His eightieth year was at hand, and the liveliest imagination would have found it difficult to recognise beneath the dress of the old gentleman-farmer the martial features of the Colonel who had spurred up the King's horse at Königgratz. Even the cartoonists would have found it anything but easy to know him again, for he had long lost the three hairs with which they had been pleased to deck his cranium. He was now a "fine old gentleman," dressed usually like a Protestant pastor, with a long black coat, a cravat of white cambric wound round his throat, and a broad-brimmed hat. The face, however, had still its look of intense energy, and from deep within the eye there occasionally flashed out the light that had made so many fires to blaze and so many human beings to tremble. The old lion was not dead—he could still roar, if need be. No, he is not dead, but death will soon pass near him, so terribly near that he will hear the beating of his wings, and his heart be stricken like a child's. The dread invisible foe will smite the devoted companion of his life—the blameless wife, who for nearly

half a century has shared so bravely and sincerely in the burden of his success and the laurels of his glory.

On the 27th of November 1894, Princess Bismarck was carried off by the illness which had been threatening her life for several months, and the aged recluse of the Sachsenwald found himself alone at the evening of his days, deprived of the Johanna who had been the beacon-light of his stormy existence, the dearly-loved wife of whom he had often said that without her he would never have become the man he was.

His grief found an echo throughout the whole German nation. Once more it was proved that the heart of Germany beat in unison with his own. And for the eightieth birthday of the old Chancellor there was a festival that surpassed in splendour all that had gone before it. The Emperor himself set the example. He betook himself to Friedrichsruh, accompanied by the young Crown Prince, and clad in the breastplate and uniform of the White Cuirassiers, his helmet surmounted by a gold eagle with wings outspread. Bismarck had donned for the occasion his uniform as a Cuirassier of the Reserves, and in the field skirting the forest, where met the old Diplomat-Soldier and the Emperor, who resembles a hero of Wagnerian opera, the enthusiastic crowd fancied once more that it was present at an interview between two sovereigns who had come to settle the peace of the world.

To be accurate, we must relate that the Emperor's journey was also intended to give a lesson and a warning to the leaders of the Opposition in the Reichstag. A few days before, the Government, speaking in the mouth of the President of the Reichstag, Herr von Levetzow, had proposed to Parliament that they should send to Bismarck the congratulations of the whole Assembly on this the occasion of his eightieth birthday. The Liberals and

Catholics had both protested: and Deputy von Hodenberg had mounted the tribune and declared—

"In the name of my Hanoverian friends, I beg the President, if he is commissioned to congratulate Prince Bismarck, to except us expressly from his message. It is not for us to share in the honours passed to a man who, in violation of the rights that belong to the German princes and peoples, has made Hanover a Prussian province."

On this speech the Reichstag voted against Herr von Levetzow's proposals, the numbers being 163 against 146.

The Emperor's reply to this was soon forthcoming. That very day he sent the Prince the following telegram:

"*To* Prince Bismarck, Duke of Lauenburg,
Friedrichsruh.

"I beg to express to Your Highness my feelings of indignation at the late resolution of the Reichstag. It is utterly opposed to the sentiments of all the princes and peoples of Germany. William."

The anger of the Emperor did not meet with the success he expected, however, the Liberals resented this master-stroke. One of the most important Progressive Societies in South Germany (that of Pforzheim, in the Grand Duchy of Baden) returned by a vote that was openly hostile to the Sovereign:

"The Assembly expresses its profound regret that a Constitutional, though irresponsible, Personage should have allowed himself to utter an opinion contrary to the decision of the Reichstag, and it equally expresses its hope that the Reichstag will continue to form its decisions without caring whether they are pleasing or otherwise."

But neither the storm of opposition, nor the rain which on the day of the royal interview (March 27th) fell at

Friedrichsruh, in good dead earnest, could quell the harmony of the general enthusiasm. To the crowd which pressed round the plain occupied by the Cuirassiers of the Guard, tossed about every moment though it was by flying

PRINCESS BISMARCK, THE YEAR OF HER DEATH.

squadrons of photographers, reporters, and policemen,—to this crowd of Cockneys, the same there as in every other country, it was a never-to-be forgotton sight when the Emperor proudly galloped past his troops to the sound of trumpet and drum, and, drawing up his horse at

the side of the landau where the Prince sat, gave the latter the sword of honour which was his own personal gift.

This sword (which has since been much admired by noble visitors to Friedrichsruh) is a Cuirassier's sword of gold, with the shield of Bismarck on the scabbard and the Emperor's portrait on the pommel. On one side of the blade is the Imperial shield, with this inscription: "To Prince Bismarck, Duke of Lauenburg, on the occasion of his eightieth birthday." On the other side, in Gothic lettering, is the famous expression from the speech of 1888: "We Germans fear God; other fear we have none."

A device of which circumstances underlined the arrogance on that occasion,—a device in accordance with which this new sword of Damocles would seem to menace all who ventured to trouble the digestion of the German nation.

And while the Emperor congratulated the Prince in a few energetic words, mingled no doubt with allusions to the national industry of Prussia, the young Crown Prince, also in uniform and pointed helmet, stood near the landau, showing as, in allegory, the future of this nation of soldiers, for whom, it seems, there is no safety outside military enterprise.

From the zenith, the God of Arms finished by blessing the day with a tardy ray of sunshine.

On the following days there was a second edition of the *Huldigungen* of 1885: one huge progression of deputations came from all corners of the earth to salute the Patriarch of Friedrichsruh and to lay their offerings at his feet.

Amongst these offerings let us cite (in addition to the commemorative structures of chocolate and almond-cake, and the patriotic maxims printed on gifts of confectionery), a helmet covered with the skin of a hedgehog, with all its

IN THE GLADES OF SCHÖNHAUSEN.

jags on—an allusion, perhaps, to the motto of Bismarck's ancestors, "Leave the grass of our roads alone, wayfarer, and do not touch it—it has thorns!"—a butcher's diploma, sent by the fleshers and pork-butchers of Berlin; some buffaloes, sent by the German colony in Cincinnati; a huge sculptured group, representing a stag facing a pack of hounds with its head down, sent by the patriots of Anhalt; a collection of notes relative to the conduct, study, and industry of young Bismarck at the Greyfriars' Gymnasium, sent by the head-master and boarders of the institution, etc. etc. etc.

CHAPTER XII

AT FRIEDRICHSRUH

The Old Man of the Sachsenwald—Bismarck as Countryman—Professor Schwenninger, and how he became Bismarck's Doctor—A Diet of Salt Herrings—The Patriarch's House—His Private Rooms—Difficulty of Digestion—A Souvenir of Old Days—Bismarck as a Speculator on 'Change—Diplomatic Trickery.

A FEW years ago, the traveller who by chance had strayed in the Sachsenwald (Saxon forest)—it wouldn't be so easy to stray there now, thanks to the progress of forestry, the disciples of which all in uniform glide every here and there among the copses; thanks, too, to the taverns now scattered nearly everywhere, and in which one can get champagne, no less!—a few years ago, I say, the traveller who had wandered unwillingly might have met in these parts a kind of aged giant, with huge boots, dressed in a surtout or a grey plaid, his stomach well out in front, his stick passed horizontally behind his back and kept in the crook of his elbows, which were held at the square. And all at once our tourist would have recognised Bismarck, the Bismarck whom he had seen pictured a thousand times in this pastoral hermit's garb, a veritable patriarch of the woods. Besides, the presence of Tyras, or of one of his numerous descendants, would have left him in little doubt as to the old man's identity.

To-day the old man of the Sachsenwald, hampered by rheumatism and pain in his joints, hardly ever leaves his

home. Besides, the well-known features of the Bismarck of history have almost disappeared beneath the ravages of the invisible foe, which is Life; his face is downcast, almost darkened by old age; and if, thanks to a chance play of shadows, the flaps of his great Calabrian hat still give a look of the "high-tragical" to the suffering features of the worn-out but lion-like old man, this apparent resemblance to the Bismarck of yore vanishes in a moment with the grey long-peaked cap with which in bad weather the simple old peasant covers his worn head.

This title of "peasant," Bismarck would not now refuse, for the grandest honours, the most definite glories have exhausted for him all their seductions. Did not the aged Moltke one day sign himself "Moltke the peasant"? Doubtless Bismarck would do the same, if he did not find it simpler to call himself plain *von Bismarck*, embarrassed as he is by the number of titles he can choose from. There, indeed, is a brave example given to the nobles of the world.

The hermit of the Sachsenwald has remained in other respects the being eager for a simple country life that we have elsewhere seen him to be. Just as this man, with all titles of honour, flaunts no title, so, with all decorations to choose from, he carries none at all. His dress is of the simplest: he does not even wear a ring. The necks of his shirts, where his eternal white cravat is twisted round and round his throat, are not finely embroidered: the shirt itself is not even starched, and is fastened by a simple button of white bone.

Not so long ago, when he could still take long rides or walks, Bismarck used to delight in big well-greased boots; but now even this last vestige of vanity has been stripped from him by disease. The old man is forced to spend three-fourths of his time in slippers, his legs stretched out on a frame covered with black leather.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

This is the time to speak of the famous Professor Schweninger, the accredited doctor of Bismarck. He is now recognised as one of the foremost medical authorities in Germany. But it was not always so. His rapid rise, his appointment as Professor in the Medical School at Berlin, excited the envy of many, and the ferocious enmity of some. Curiously, the chief charge against him was that he was a Jew, which is not true. The doctor owes his Semitic features to his Neapolitan descent, or, at least, to the Italian blood in his veins. The rivalry of old days

BISMARCK AT KISSINGEN.

has given way before the increasing favour and popularity of the physician, especially ever since an Imperial decree has allowed the Professor complete leave from his duties, so that he can devote all his attention to Bismarck. I ought to add that the doctor is supposed to have saved Bismarck's life, which has greatly contributed, no doubt, to disarm the hatred of his colleagues.

Schweninger has established a regular institute at Berlin, where, to-day, he has numerous pupils. His

verdict is accepted like that of the Faculty itself, and his opinion is listened to like an oracle. Moreover, he has kept up a huge practice, which he attends to by post, for he rarely leaves Friedrichsruh. Postal communication with the quiet retreat is as marvellously complete as it was when Bismarck was still Chancellor.

While most German post-offices shut at eight or nine o'clock, that at Friedrichsruh never shuts till midnight, and, indeed, never shuts at all on the great days of the Bismarck festival. That means, of course, that the doctor's voluminous correspondence never has to stop for a moment, coming or going. The hermit of the Sachsenwald enjoys, for his own convenience and that of his guests, truly princely privileges. A simple telegram sent by him to one of the stations on the Hamburg-Berlin line, and the fastest expresses, those that thunder past every other station, will stop at Friedrichsruh, a Sleepy Hollow mentioned in no geographical map, the whole population of which doesn't amount to more than a hundred souls. Of his own goodwill Bismarck never makes use of this privilege unless he has guests coming by the train. But this detail will suffice to give an idea of the regard in which the illustrious old man is held in his place of retreat.

Let us return to Dr. Schwenninger, to recall an anecdote that caused great amusement at the time of his introduction to Bismarck.

The Professor was just beginning to be known when he was first summoned to Bismarck's house, to attend his son William, who was attacked, it seems, by St. Vitus' dance. Schwenninger effected a radical cure, and from that moment began to rise in the Prince's estimation, who ended by consulting him on his own behalf. But the first consultation gives rise to an incident that nearly spoiled everything. Schwenninger had begun by asking so many

questions of the Prince, that the latter became impatient, and suddenly cried—

"What else have you got to ask—eh? I sent for you to cure my disease, and not to cross-examine me, sir!"

But the young doctor did not flinch.

"If I ask Your Excellency questions, it is only that I may make a proper diagnosis on which to base my treatment. If Your Excellency does not want to be questioned, you should have gone to a veterinary surgeon.

BISMARCK AT THE BATHS OF KISSINGEN.

They are in the habit of curing their patients without asking any questions!"

Bismarck darted a terrible look at him, but gave in, contenting himself with the answer—

"Well, sir, go on. I only hope for one thing, and that is that you can cure me and show me that your skill is as great as your impudence!"

And Schweninger had the unlooked-for good fortune to cure his patient. "Good-fortune" is said advisedly, for in these matters chance plays a greater *rôle* than is

generally thought. To be just, though, I should say that the health of the Prince was in a very serious state when he determined to consult the young Professor. He was failing visibly, and all the doctors he had consulted said he had cancer in the stomach and liver! The Faculty had, in short, given his family to understand that his death was merely a question of time.

The intervention of Schwenninger immediately raised his patient's spirits and comforted the family.

According to his diagnosis, the theory of a cancer was mistaken, examination showing nothing but a considerable swelling of the stomach and intestines. So Schwenninger, who is a convinced partisan of rational therapeutics—that is, of a cure based upon hygienic laws and a proper regimen of diet—was the very man for the case. The treatment he prescribed was of the strictest kind. It consisted entirely of a dietetic regimen, from which there was to be no escape scarcely, and which was willingly submitted to by Bismarck when he found he wouldn't have to swallow physic, a thing he abhors. For six weeks the Prince agreed to live on nothing but salt herrings, to which were added later a little butter, bread, and potatoes. All drink had been forbidden him, until, his recovered strength permitting him to take some exercise, he was allowed by the doctor to drink an hour after meals a few mouthfuls of spring water.

This regimen was entirely successful, for the patient rapidly got well, and soon was able to resume his former way of life. One can see from these facts that Dr. Schwenninger really saved the Prince's life, and the gratitude vowed him by the whole Bismarck family is not without a solid foundation.

We must now describe the Castle of Friedrichsruh—the least pretending of his residences—which Bismarck once intended to make a simple country seat, but in which

he decided later to spend the remainder of his years. Nobody has ever been able to explain his reasons for the decision, which apparently has nothing to justify it.—neither the beauty of the site, which is wanting in picturesque relief, in spite of the Sachsenwald, nor the dwelling itself, which joins to a minimum of comfort all the inconveniences imaginable. Among others are the smallness of the rooms, situated almost on the level of the ground, and so damp that the huge chimneys can scarcely keep them dry, and the particularly disagreeable proximity of one of the noisiest railways in Germany, with every express from Berlin to Hamburg flinging noise and smoke into the bedroom of the master, which is in the corner of the Castle not more than thirty yards from the line. The Prince is by no means indifferent to all these annoyances, but it is well known with what stoicism he meets all the accidents of man's physical life.

Although he neglects the advice of La Fontaine and devotes himself to planting—the young trees growing in the neighbouring nurseries, and waiting till their predecessors of a hundred years yield to the axe and give way to them, show what his tastes are—yet he insists upon no more building being undertaken at his time of life. He says he prefers to leave that job to his sons. I believe that Bismarck's attachment to Friedrichsruh is simply the whimsy of an old man, who, after squandering his life in journeys and shiftings of all kinds now shrinks from the thought of a fresh removal, and ends by taking root in the ground that seems best suited to his health. For him, as for so many others, the maximum of comfort is doubtless represented by the minimum of suffering, and this minimum is to be found, we are to suppose, in the meridian where lies the Duchy of Lauenburg.

And this should put an end to the legend about the two-faced Cincinnatus, who is supposed to persist in living

his lonely life amid the woods and fields, only for the sake of the martyr's glory which such a life confers upon him in the eyes of politicians! There is no farce of that kind in Bismarck's eccentric devotion to Friedrichsruh. He could "till his garden" quite as well at Varzin, Schönhausen, or any other of his country seats, all of which are better than Friedrichsruh, so far as the beautiful and the picturesque are concerned. If he stays where he does, it is, as we say, simply from the crotchet of an old man's mind, strengthened by a more or less illusory idea that the place is healthier than others, and no doubt also because he feels nearer Berlin and the German Court there—Berlin, which perhaps has the same constant charm for the old diplomatist that Paris has for your true Parisian.

In the course of a tour through Germany, I had the good fortune to see from my sleeping-car the mansion of Friedrichsruh flash past, and the vision left me with the same disappointing impression I have often seen referred to by German reporters themselves. The house itself belongs to no known style of architecture, and one doesn't know what to call it, unless we constrain our minds to give it a name borrowed less from its likeness to a Swiss chalet than from its site and the wooded nature of the country. It has certainly nothing in common with a castle, however simple and unpretending, and I can understand that Bismarck might have felt some resentment with a celebrated contemporary writer who called him "the châtelain of Friedrichsruh." From any pen but that of an admirer this would sound suspiciously like irony.

If we turn round the wall of the park, which comes close to the edge of the railway, we shall have the best view of the Prince's residence. Here one of the jutting wings, built on the site of an old shooting-lodge, offers a

kind of terrace (above the ground-floor) whence Bismarck readily harangues the numerous deputations that come to do him homage. These deputations are hardly ever admitted into the house itself, which has always been strictly closed to outsiders and general visitors, with the one exception of officers in uniform, for Bismarck has never lost his love of a red coat.

If his threshold is so well guarded, it is simply that it may be safe from indiscretions like that of the devout but somewhat indelicate admirer who annexed, as a souvenir of his pilgrimage, the manuscript containing the good wishes sent by William I. to Bismarck on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday.

On this terrace open, without a step, the doors of the dining-room, which communicates on the other side with the grand drawing-room. Thanks to the numerous and lofty windows opening on the park, the first of these rooms is very pleasant and cheerful, in spite of the grey paper with which the walls of this and every other room are covered. We may say at once that the generally severe tone of the interior—that of the Prince's private rooms in particular—the ordinary furniture, the stiffness, the discomfort,—all this is quite what you would expect from the mean exterior. This shows that want of artistic sensibility on which Bismarck has so often prided himself, holding as he does that the qualities of the artist and the statesman are quite incompatible.

On the walls of the dining-room are some pictures by Lenbach and Menzel: closely landscapes. Bismarck wished to hang there also, in accordance with the donor's desire, the portrait of William II., sent him in May 1890, but the picture was too big for the wall! It may be seen at the museum (which Bismarck has been at pains to make at Schönhausen), together with the numerous gifts and presents sent to him during late years.

One of the doors of the dining-room leads to the drawing-room, the windows of which also open on the park. Thither the family and guests repair after dinner. A large couch occupies one angle of the room, and this used to be the Prince's favourite corner. Every night he scattered round him the wit and gaiety that came to him with good digestion, surrounded by a circle of friends whose veritable and venerable deity he was. The illusion of godhead was completed by the clouds of smoke puffed from his lips or the bowl of his pipe, so thick sometimes that they almost hid him altogether.

Nowadays the patriarch is not so strong, and his digestion is feebler, and in consequence his temper is less equable and sociable, and he often asks those about him to overlook his dulness and grumpiness. "It's the result of old age and its attendant evils, but it doesn't last long in my case." And, to be the more readily forgiven, he goes off of his own accord after dinner to a small room adjoining, where he waits till bed-time, deep in the study of journals and papers.

The old Soldier-Diplomatist has, in truth, quite a fatherly regard for his younger guests,—for their gaiety, into which he is afraid of introducing a false note; for their pleasures, which he is afraid of hampering. As a matter of fact, the members of the family, when alone together, are fond of a little game of cards in the evening in the company of their friends, and the presence of the old man might act as a restraint on their enjoyment. Besides, Bismarck never cared for cards except when he was very young. The truth is he despises most games. Once only, by his own confession, did he speculate in Stocks, at the time when he was not yet a Minister of the Crown, but his venture succeeded so badly that he never repeated it.

It was when Bismarck was charged with a mission to Napoleon III., with regard to the question of Neuf-

châtel. The Prussians being on the point of declaring war against the Swiss, tried to get permission from the French to send their troops through the Eastern provinces of France. Bismarck, convinced that the war would come, ordered the Rothschilds of Frankfort to sell his

STARTING FOR A RIDE.

shares, who for their part tried to persuade him not to. But he wouldn't listen to them, and stuck to his order to sell. The war didn't come off, there was a rise in prices, and the unskilful gambler lost a considerable sum of money.

THE LAST INTERVIEW.

With regard to cards, the Prince told Herr Busch of a Machiavellian trick, almost too good to be true, and doubtless owing most of its piquancy to his own imagination.

It was at Gastein in 1865, during the negotiations preliminary to the Austro-Prussian Convention.

"Sometimes they had fairly heavy games of an evening. One night I went in for quinze myself, playing in a mad sort of way to impress the gallery. This nonsense, of course, was only for a blind. Blome, the Austrian diplomatist, had pretended on the day before that he could derive valuable information about the moral worth of a player from watching the way in which he played. I was content to drop a few hundred thalers, in order that he might have a poor opinion of me. He thought, in consequence, that he was dealing with a reckless fool—which enabled me to get the better of him in the subsequent negotiations."

As to games of chance, Bismarck told Herr Busch that he used to like them, but only when the stakes were high, and that that didn't do for the father of a family.

We may mention, in passing, another room close to the drawing-room, in which are some objects of art and some presents greatly prized by Bismarck, especially a silver model of the National Monument at Niederwald, sent him by the Emperor William, with the following words:

"The key-note of your policy,—a souvenir of a ceremony especially dedicated to you, but at which unfortunately you were unable to attend."

Among the pictures there is a portrait by Lenbach, representing Bismarck in the dress of a forester, with his grey peaked cap on his head.

CHAPTER XIII

Bismarck's Bedroom—Tyras I., Tyras II., and Rebecca—Bismarck as a Lover of Animals—Weighing-machine and Strength-measurer—The Variations in the Chancellor's Weight—The Bismarck Family all have their Heights Measured—Bismarck is his own Barber—The Boudoir of the late Princess—How he spends the Night—Difficulty met in Annexing Property—A Village without Hairdresser, Pastor, Magistrate, Church, or School—Bismarck as a Manufacturer of Wooden Pavements—Legends of the Forest: the *Horla* of the Sachsenwald.

The private rooms of the Prince, which are the plainest and simplest possible, are situated on the first floor, in one of the extreme wings of the Castle. His bedroom and study occupy the corner nearest the railway, and there is a kind of ante-chamber, which you must pass through to reach these two rooms. This serves both as parlour and library. But it has no great number of books, and the library properly so called contains little but political pamphlets and works on agriculture. On the walls there is a portrait of Thiers, one of Moltke, and another of the young Emperor in the uniform of the Red Hussars.

The study opening out of this room is no less severe in furniture and ornament. An enormous writing-table is planted in the middle of the floor, with ink, paper, and all else that is needed in writing, not forgetting the traditional quill pen (Bismarck has always said that steel pens gave him cramp in the fingers). Not far from the writing-table is a small gaming-table, the identical table on which were signed the preliminaries of the peace of Versailles, and

which was bought by the Prince from Madame Jessé. It is not unusual to see either on this or the writing-table a bottle of *light champagne* of the best brand, for the Prince is in the habit of fighting the effects of damp or cold with a few mouthfuls of good alcohol. But cognac is, as we have said, the favourite drink of Bismarck.

The frames on the walls contain portraits of the family mostly, but there are some pictures of German sovereigns, such as Frederick the Great, William the First (in civil attire), Frederick the Second, etc. The only furniture is a large divan and an arm-chair of the most ordinary kind.

And now we are in the bedroom, the chief private room of the Prince. An intruder who had been able to escape the vigilance of Pinnow the valet, and had succeeded, in the master's absence, in crossing the simple threshold of the house, might easily make his way to the sanctuary in question, for a thick carpet deadens the footsteps, as it does in all the other rooms. But he would have no great reason to be proud of his success, for the approach to the bed is generally guarded by Tyras and his spouse Rebecca, who would give him a reception far from encouraging.

This Rebecca, you must understand, is the *descendant* of the Rebecca mentioned in one of the letters we have quoted. Her father, Tyras I., was the *Reichshund*, properly so called, and was in no way connected with Tyras the Second. The latter was a gift of the Emperor William II. Had it not been for that, Bismarck would certainly have got rid of him, for he does not conceal the fact that he is anything but pleased with him.

"Tyras," he says, "is a disgraceful brute! His lips are too thick, and he has a habit of slavering the whole time. *I* would never have bought such a brute." Herr von Bottticher, who bought the dog for the Emperor, must, it seems, be a very poor judge. As for Rebecca, she is of the best breed, but now getting old and fat.

You must not conclude from what has been said that Bismarck bears out his opinion of the Emperor's gift by any ill-treatment of poor Tyras. He is too fond of animals not to be the first to do justice to the good points by which the big dog redeems his defects, especially his gentleness and evenness of temper, and his habit of being friends with everybody, and getting on intimate terms even with those he meets for the first time. The mere fact that you may find the two dogs — they have no offspring, I may say in passing — lying on the sofa or arm-chair of their master, shows clearly enough his kindliness towards them.

At Berlin, Tyras the First used to assist at the social gatherings of the Chancellor, although the animal wasn't always in the best of humour, and often showed its teeth at those members of the circle who hadn't been properly introduced to him. His master's weakness for him was such, that he never paid any attention to his fits of ill-temper. Bismarck used to think it a sufficient excuse to the ill-treated individual to say, "This animal will end by getting me into hot water with everybody."

One must dwell on this strong love of Bismarck for animals, for it is, as I think I have already said, a characteristic of most humorists. And just there on a little bracket is the portrait of a black greyhound, the famous Sultan, who for long years was the faithful companion of the diplomat, and his silent comrade (the silence of animals is evidently one great cause of our affection for them). One day Sultan attacked a passing tram, and was literally torn to pieces. Its terrible sufferings so excited Bismarck, that his son Herbert tried to take him away from the spot. But the Prince, meeting the tear-dimmed eye of the dog, with that awful appealing look in it of animals on the brink of death, turned and said, "No; I cannot leave him like this!"

Then, when Sultan breathed his last, the Prince wiped his eyes and murmured to himself—

"Our Teuton forefathers showed benevolence in their religion. They believed they would find in the hunting-grounds of their paradise all the dogs that had been their faithful comrades here below. I wish I could believe that."

THE BISMARCK MUSEUM AT SCHÖNHAUSEN.

With a somewhat more generous conception of nature, Bismarck might have long since added this belief to his Protestant faith, for it is plainly illogical to believe in a future reserved for men and not for the rest of God's creatures.

Bismarck is not only the friend of dogs, but also of birds of all sizes, with the exception of birds of prey, which

quickly arouse in him his instincts as a hunter. All the others he readily protects, and follows their doings with the eager interest of the naturalist. So all the crows of the fields, all the magpies and starlings, adore

BISMARCK WITH A BEARD.

the grounds of Friedrichsruh, where they are left to pursue their pastimes and occupations in the greatest security.

Two unusual articles of furniture are seen the moment one enters the bedroom. These are a weighing-machine

and a kind of strength-measurer. The weighing-machine is used for taking the Prince's weight daily, according to the doctor's orders; and the use of the second instrument is visible in a moment. It is like a huge barometric frame, so to speak, resting on the floor and reaching almost to the ceiling. By drawing handles that project on both sides, you can raise a weight placed at the bottom of the apparatus and gliding up and down in longitudinal slides. 'Tis an excellent means of exercise, requiring the use of considerable strength, and gives the chief muscles of the body and limbs the healthiest of training.

The weighing-machine which registers the variations in Bismarck's weight has always played an important part in his physiological studies. For we must remember that he once weighed as much as 247 lb., and that the chief object of his "cure" at Kissingen was to get rid of his obesity. He succeeded in doing so, for, after many oscillations between this extreme limit and a minimum of 209 lb., his weight at the present day is still lower than his former minimum. The Berlin newspaper men have carried their indiscretion the length of giving a table of his weights from year to year, — another proof of German fanaticism for this great man, their "unique hero," their "one and only," as they call him.

And here is a curious thing. That kind of obsession which makes certain habits acquire a regular tyranny over highly-strung natures, by doing every day the very same thing, has induced Bismarck to apply his own system of weighing and measuring to the whole family. For the habit of measuring height, which I haven't yet spoken of, is shown by the register fixed permanently against a wall in a neighbouring room. The Prince amused himself one day (the last day of December 1880) by making all his

family submit to being measured, and these are the various heights:

Bismarck	1 metre, 880
Count Herbert	1 „ 860
Count William	1 „ 851
Count Rantzau	1 „ 780
Princess Bismarck	1 „ 714
Countess Rantzau	1 „ 716

The average height of the family is very considerable, and few families in all France could equal it. The height of Bismarck himself, of course, is exceptional, even in Prussia. This accounts for the surprise of Prince William in 1847, when the young Referendary was first introduced to him. The Crown Prince couldn't keep from saying that "the Civil Administration must be going to the Horse Guards for its referendaires," the Horse Guards being then composed of the tallest men in the country.

The exceedingly simple furniture of the bedroom comprises a fairly large bed, a cupboard, a huge dressing-table, a sofa, an armchair (these last for the use of the dogs mostly), some wooden chairs, a large movable mirror, and a whatnot full of pamphlets and books for reading in bed. Among these, the German writer from whom we borrow these details says he saw a book of prayers and a volume of Luther's *Meditations*, and even a kind of religious diary, where the Prince noted down his own daily meditations. If true, this may be attributed to a laudable desire to make himself worthy of his "D.D." rather than to a real spirit of devotion, which would be rather late in coming to him at his time of life.

A door near this whatnot leads to the room reserved for the Prince's wardrobe and to the chamber of Pinnow, the valet. The word "wardrobe," however, is an exaggeration, for the closet contains hardly anything but rows of boots and dressing-gowns, more or less worn.

In front of the mirror Bismarck used to plant himself every morning and shave, for until quite lately he shaved himself. Nowadays, we daresay, his hand isn't firm and steady enough for such a delicate task, and perhaps it's his valet that attends to it. "Perhaps," we say, because it's only a conjecture of our own.

But a likely enough conjecture, when you reflect that there is not a single barber in Friedrichsruh, and that the male population of the village has to put up with the services of a wandering fellow who passes once a week. Bismarck long ago left off letting his beard grow. Twice only has he tried a beard, once at Kissingen, when a rheumatism had stiffened his right arm, and later at Varzin, when he had an attack of neuralgia. But his face was so entirely changed by the sudden growth of a white beard, that ever since he has refused to do without his razor.

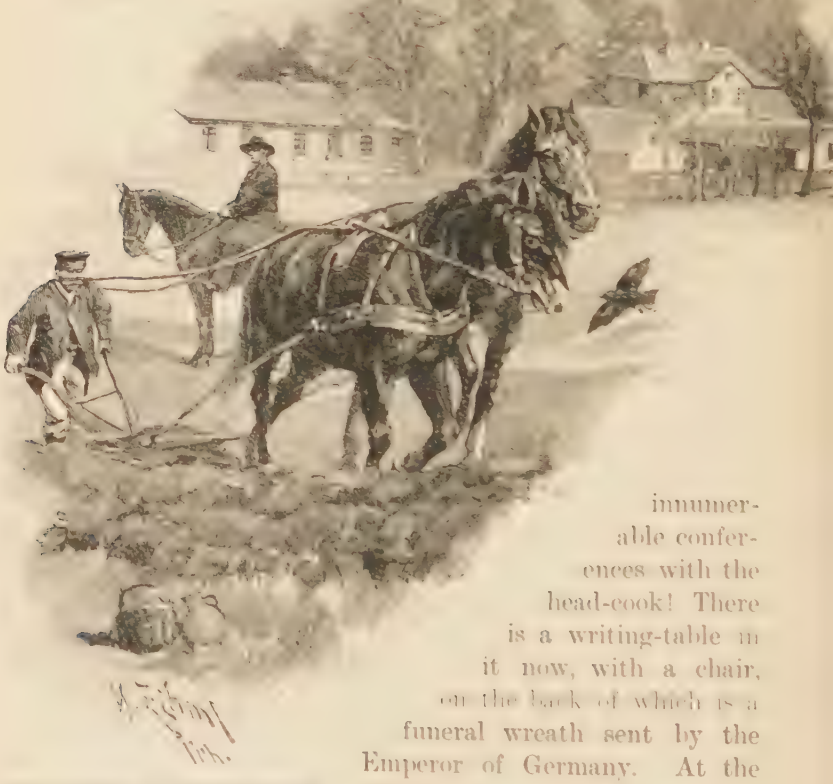
The same sort of thing happened, we are told, to the Emperor William II., who, during a voyage in the North, allowed his august cheeks to be invaded by a pair of "favourites," like those worn by his illustrious grandsire. You couldn't have told who he was; he saw that his Imperial dignity was in danger—and he had 'em shaved off on the spot. Perhaps Mahomet was right in the name he gave the beard!

Family portraits, though common in the other rooms, are scarce in these. However, there's a portrait of the Princess, one of Count William at the time of his youth, an engraving of the poet Upland, and, lastly, a fine portrait of Dr. Schwenninger by Lenbach.

There are some other pictures of still life and some studies of animals, all showing the zoological turn of the occupant's mind.

Another room, more or less directly connected with the Prince's apartments, is the boudoir of the late Princess.

But the word "boudoir," employed by German writers in this connection, seems to me to have a very different meaning from the one we usually give to it; for they tell us at the same time that it was here that the Princess had her



THE MASTER OF FRIEDRICHSRUH VISITS HIS DOMAINS.

innumerable conferences with the head-cook! There is a writing-table in it now, with a chair, on the back of which is a funeral wreath sent by the Emperor of Germany. At the writing-table, which is not a bit like a piece of furniture fit for

a boudoir, the Princess used to work. Here she cast up the household accounts, and passed her time in filling up pass-books with every little item of expenditure: these pass-books still remain as the faithful guardians of economical secrets, with which we for our part have nothing to do. Slanderous tongues in Germany have been heard to call this kind of economies nothing but avarice.

The furniture of the room has been in no way changed since the death of the Princess. At the side of the table is a statue of the Prince in marble. Its pedestal and the neighbouring table are littered with numerous photographs of illustrious personages, and personages more or less royal, some framed and some not, but all with dashing autographs.

To return to the Prince's bedroom. It is actually so near the railway that when a train passes the walls shake. But perhaps the old man loves to hear the bold heavy sound thundering past when he is sleepless, and is grateful to it for dispelling the phantoms of the night, for breaking the silence that weighs like a pall, now that he can no longer get up and work as he used to. One day he made a very touching confession about this.

"The silence that follows moonlight is terrible: it rouses all the bad spirits that beset me, and makes me the victim of my own imagination. To escape from the thoughts that come, I force myself to rise and write. Often, in such cases, I have pictured beforehand the whole course of a discussion, first giving the field to my opponents, then meeting them with arguments so sensible and convincing, that I had to get up and write them down for fear of forgetting them. And yet I never could make use of these arguments afterwards; I found them too subtle for the general. So the paper and ink which are always at my pillow were wasted to no purpose . . . It is only

when the early noises betoken the approach of day that I begin to slumber."

One concludes that Bismarck can't be a very early riser. However, he gets up about ten and opens his correspondence, while he is going on with his dressing or taking his early breakfast, composed of eggs, tea, or coffee and milk. He used to spend the day in long walks and rides, but now the old man only goes out when he is forced to do so to keep up his strength, for his rheumatism has become much worse of late years.

We must say something of the country itself. The tiny village is overlooked by geographers, but it is trumpeted forth on the wall of the Landhaus by an official placard so rich in instruction, topographical and administrative, that you might look for the like in vain on any of the main routes to our populous centres. I copy it word for word:

FRIEDRICHSRUH	
Gutsbezirk Schwarzenbek	
Amtsbezirk Friedrichsruh	
Kreis-Herzgoth: Lauenburg	
Reg-Bez. Schleswig	
LANDWEHRBEZIRK	LUBECK
HAUPTMELDEAMT	CASERNE

This table, you see, gives all the information relative to the civil, administrative, and military state of the commune, and might serve as a model to the French in doing up the sign-plates in their districts and departments.

However, at Friedrichsruh it may be considered quite unnecessary, the few houses that make up the village being, with the exception of the railway station, the sole property of Bismarck, inhabited by none but his servants and employés, whether farm-hands or foresters.

These houses have been acquired by Bismarck, be it told, by a very slow and difficult process of annexation.

When the present Duke of Lauenburg—the Duchy itself comes from an annexation which might be disputed, for it was part of the prize won by the Prussian armies in

BISMARCK AS COLONEL OF THE LANDWEHR.

the Danish war—took possession of his domain, he determined to use his influence to expropriate his subjects; that is, he bought up all the leaseholds which the owners would sell for cash down. Two cottages alone stood out against him, and, keen as he was on getting them, he had to wait for the price appeared to him exorbitant.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.
NOTTINGHAM.

Did not the recalcitrants think that it was for their own good the Prince wished to become their absolute master? Apparently not, for they held out till 1885, when a number of Hamburg bigwigs bought them out for 40,000 marks, and presented the houses to the Prince on his sixtieth birthday.

To-day, then, the process of annexation is complete, and the inhabitants of Friedrichsruh are all of them subjects of the Prince, forming in this Sleepy Hollow a sort of feudal phalanstery, the members of which all intermarry and settle down in the place. There's some merit in their doing that, for it's rather difficult to get married at Friedrichsruh. Just as there is no barber, so there is neither church nor pastor. To obtain the blessing of the Church, the bridal pair have to take a honeymoon journey *before* marriage, lasting for twenty minutes, which brings them to the station of Schwarzenbeck. The civil part of the ceremony used to be in the hands of the head forester, who filled the post of magistrate; but now it is Count Rantzau, as mayor of the district, who discharges that duty.

A strange district, truly!—for the want of a school is added to other inconveniences, and the inhabitants have to send their children to Aumühl (a mile and a half off) if they want them to get any education at all. To make up for it, though, the roads and footpaths through the forest are swarming with foresters in uniform, and with busy woodmen, whose echoing axes provide material for the large steam saw-mill close to the station.

This important industry, founded and carried on by Bismarck himself, sells annually wood to the value of 1,000,000 marks, the greatest part of which is used for paving large towns. Rome and Berlin have several streets laid with this wood, which, some say, is very bad, and is very little appreciated, especially by the people of Berlin.

PROF. SCHWENNINGER. COUNTESS HOYOS. THE PRINCESS. HERBERT AND HIS WIFE. COUNT AND COUNTESS VON RANTZAU
W. VON BISMARCK. COUNT HOYOS. THE PRINCE. AND THEIR SONS.
IRENE VON BISMARCK. COUNTESS W. VON BISMARCK, ETC.

However, the business used to cause a great deal of trouble to Bismarck when he was Chancellor, and it often happened that this industry was found incompatible with that other great national industry of which the *blasé*

BISMARCK IN 1894.

diplomat was then the accredited professor. The pressmen of the time show us the Premier breaking off his innumerable conferences with his head forester, to settle hurriedly with a flying pen the affairs of Russia, Austria, and France, or to square his account with England, and then plunging

once more with delight into the study of the most practical methods of converting into paving-blocks the hundred-year-old beeches of the Sachsenwald.

Nowadays, though, these old trees are more respected. Being old himself, Bismarck spares the more willingly all

WILLIAM II. AND THE CHANCELLOR AT FRIEDRICHSRUH (OCTOBER 1888).

old things — trees, dogs, and people. The Sachsenwald, where are mingled all kinds of trees — oaks, birches, beeches, elms, firs, and chestnuts, the lofty branches of which cover a space of 18,000 acres — is divided into several lots, most of which are preserved for purposes of

sport, or converted into parks for the rearing of game. The forest, properly speaking, is very agreeably diversified, here and there, with glades where the luminous gleam of a pool peeps through the fringing trees, with tiny valleys where the shade of the boughs seem still more mystic and strange than usual, where the branches meet and intertwine, making vaults of greenery, where glide babbling little streams, full, we are told, of the most excellent trout.

Finally, there are legends that come to the mind with the strong wind sighing in the great and aged beech trees, in the dim naves where tosses the uncertain gleam of the birch, in those close thickets where the axe has never been. These legends are not all of fantasies and fancies; they have for heroes beings more or less human—strange animals, too, of which the natives used willingly to talk. Doubtless, most of the good or evil spirits that, according to tradition, dwell in the forest—dwarfs, gnomes, sylphs, lemurs—are a direct legacy from the Middle Ages. Such is the fantastic *Waul*, a kind of mysterious and unapproachable *Herlà* who scours the country with his two dogs. Some old dwellers in these parts are said to have seen one of these dogs, which was forgotten by its master one Sabbath evening and took refuge below a bed. It was a hunting dog, marked white and black. It remained a whole year lying in the same place, without taking any food, and growling when man or beast approached it. Then it disappeared as suddenly as it had come, being carried off by the *Waul* on one of his nightly rounds. There was also a white horse that wandered in the forest, taller than the highest trees. Its apparition was generally an omen of coming misfortune.

I ought to add that none of the Bismarck family have ever seen it.

CHAPTER XIV

AT VARZIN

Beneath the Trees—The Castle and Park of Varzin—The Topographical Sense in Bismarck—A Missed Vocation—His Falls from Horseback—Facts about his Cranium—Bismarck imitates Herbert Spencer—The Village Inn—The Mysterious Ladder—How Bismarck gets rid of the Importunate—Personal Pride—The Opinion of a Belgian Diplomatist—Mournful Confessions.

"All forests are alike," said a celebrated thinker, "their appearance is attended with the same delusion that besets human life. From a distance they have an imposing, mysterious, seductive look; when you enter them they are nothing but trees."

This will save us giving a description of the forest of Varzin, which indeed is very like that of Sachsenwald, only a little more picturesque. We find there the same green overhanging archways, the same lofty beeches and pines, the same chattering brooks and the same pools, with the addition of a marshy lake covered with reeds and white water-lilies, lying at the foot of the wooded slopes joining Urisson to Varzin.

The Prince's Castle—for we are really dealing with a castle now, although it is not very imposing—is situated at a short distance from the village, from which it is separated by the main road and the park. It is composed of the ancient manor-house proper, and of a more modern building, erected since 1871, with two wings and rough-

BISMARCK'S DOGS.

casted in yellow. A big flight of steps, adorned with two double rows of dwarf palm trees, conducts us from the main courtyard to the verandah where the Prince generally receives his visitors. This verandah communicates with a green-house which opens on the other side to a garden, the borders of which are fantastically designed with clumps of flowers.

Behind this garden lies the park with its great lawn gently sloping away, adorned with statues and crowned by a small and delicately built temple, whence there is a beautiful view. It consists of about forty-five acres planted with oaks and beeches, and stretches to the banks of a small stream, a mile and a quarter off, which drives the mills we shall shortly be speaking of. The entrance to the park is by a little bridge over a pond, peopled with gold fish, trout, and carp.

The inside of the Castle shows at the first glance how superior it is to Friedrichsruh, from the point of view of comfort, and also of good taste in the adornment. In the Prince's private room all the furniture is in old oak, in the style of the Renaissance. The walls themselves are covered with oak more than six feet up. A huge fire-place, in green tile-work, occupies one corner of the room, canted a bit forward. It was expressly made for burning trunks of trees without having to split them. On both sides of the fire-place a collection of shields stand for ornaments: among others the shield of Alsace-Lorraine, and the new shield of Bismarck, with the famous device chosen by himself, *In Trinitate Robur*. Not a very Protestant maxim, truly, but one in which is crystallised, if you examine it, the perpetual phrases, "With God's help," "By the grace of God," which occur like a kind of *leit motif* in all the speeches, letters, and private conversations of Bismarck. A sofa occupies the full length of the wall opposite the entrance. A huge table placed before

this sofa is covered with pamphlets and a heap of maps. Bismarck has always been devoted to maps, topographical and ethnographical. Just as an instinct of mathematical precision makes him constantly consult the thermometer and barometer, so as to know in what temperature and under what pressure of air he is moving, just as he attaches great importance to figures that give his weight and height to a nicety, so he cannot stand the idea of following a road of which he doesn't know every winding beforehand, or of venturing on a country of which he has not studied the general features and the means of communication. There is not an example of him going on a journey, or allowing his family to go on a journey, without looking up the map first, and he invariably chooses the shortest and most convenient route.

The walls of his study are covered with souvenirs of the war of '66, either paintings or photographs. The writing-table is near one of the windows that open on the main courtyard. A howitzer shell serves as a paper-weight. Here also is a kind of tobacco-coffer, with the head of the famous Sultan (whose death we related in the last chapter) carved in relief on the lid of it. We should remember that the details given here refer to the time when Varzin was the regular country house of Bismarck, and that some of the objects here mentioned have since been taken to Friedrichsruh. The study itself has been since assigned to the use of Count Herbert, and sometimes serves as a reception-room.

Among other rooms we may mention a well-lighted and beautiful dining-room, a drawing-room most tastefully adorned, and a billiard-room. The stairs and corridors between these two apartments are decorated with the horns of stags, mouflons, and bucks, trophies of the chase carried off by Bismarck in his youth.

When the Chancellor used to spend his summers at

Varzin, he led a life sufficient to occupy the most vigorous temperament; his holidays really consisted in a fit of overseeing zeal, of which our Excellencies in their country retreats could conceive no idea. He passed his mornings conferring time about with his head-forester, his gardener, his architect, his personal adviser, Herr Busch, or with the manager of his three mills. The forester especially was the bondman of the Chancellor, whose love of wood-craft is well known. He once said, "I was meant for a forester, I have missed my vocation in life."

Hunting and long rides were naturally the favourite amusements of the Châtelain of Varzin. Being a splendid horseman, Bismarck was always off like a demon the moment he was in the saddle. It was the *tolle yunker* of yore who then appeared 'neath the coat of the diplomat, and these wild gallopings were dangerous freaks. They have cost Bismarck more than fifty tumbles, some of which were very serious. The last was in the neighbourhood of Varzin, and the Chancellor had three ribs broken.

"With regard to tumbles," said he once to Herr Busch and his colleagues, "I once had one which shows how closely human thought is dependent on human physique. My brother and I were returning from hunting one evening, and were spurring our horses at their utmost. All at once my brother, who was in front, heard a loud noise. It was my head that had just struck the causeway.

"The horse, frightened by a carriage coming in the opposite direction, had swerved, and then reared and fallen back on me. I lost consciousness, and when I came to myself, I found myself in a kind of sleep-walking condition. Part of my head seemed in a state of coma. I examined my horse and found that it was ruptured. I got on to the outrider's horse and went home. The dogs received us as usual with joyous barkings. I did not

recognise them, and, taking them for strange dogs, I threatened to strike them.

"Then I told how the outrider had fallen from his horse, and ordered them to go and look for him with a litter. As they did not obey me I got into a furious rage, and reproached my brother for his hard-heartedness. I had an idea at the moment that I was both myself and the outrider! Meanwhile dinner was brought in; I sat down and made a hearty meal. Then I went to bed, and a sleep quite cured me: for on the following morning I had forgotten all about it."

We may say, in passing, that the case wasn't so extraordinary as Bismarck seemed to think. These examples of partial loss of memory, complicated by a kind of reduplication of one's personality, are often the result of traumatic accidents, and recent works on the pathology of the brain have shed great light on them.

The two factories, of which we gave engravings a little above, are fully a mile from Varzin, on the little river Wipper, the rapid waters of which are diverted for their use. Their wheels, driven for the most part by water, give the motive power that is used to convert the wood of the forest-cuttings into paper and pasteboard. This paper, unlike the paving-wood from Friedrichsruh, is, it seems, very well thought of in Germany, and sometimes the orders are in excess of the total output of the mills. Moreover, the revenue from his paper-factories has enabled Bismarck to wipe off the considerable expense incurred in buying, enlarging, and repairing the estate.

After the morning's reports and conferences, come in the afternoon visits to the plantations, the fisheries, and also to the farm that furnishes everything needed at Varzin, with the exception of wine. But this picture of the Prince's activity would not be complete, if we did not add to the tasks he thus laid on himself, the less agreeable

work connected with his immense correspondence and his numerous visitors.

A few figures are sufficient to show the drawbacks attaching to the popularity for which so many enemies have envied Bismarck. In one single year the appeals for money sent to him come to £520,000, and the village post-office forwarded to him six

THE AGED HORSEMAN.

hundred and fifty thousand letters and ten thousand telegrams.

There was work to appal the strongest and sturdiest. Being unable to deal with such a mass of correspondence, even if he had kept his secretaries and himself awake half the night, he resolved to insert a notice in the papers—but it had no effect.

More recently Herbert Spencer in England had recourse to the same method. He sent a printed circular to his correspondents (perhaps he still does so) telling them that to save health and time he could not possibly answer any letter about his personal life, his tastes, his ideas, or his works.

As for visitors, Bismarck had no way of escaping these, except by closing the door in their faces—as he still does at Friedrichsruh.

That was the origin of the vogue obtained by the little village inn, for this serves as a kind of refuge to disappointed visitors, who often prolong their sojourn in the hope of forcing an entrance some time or other. After the attack of Kullmann, a number of policemen were stationed in the inn, who made that their headquarters, and accompanied the Prince on all his journeys. That did not prevent the coming and going of customers, recruited from the pilgrims on whose face the door had been shut. There were more than once, it seems, among these, illustrious personages whose titles were hidden by incognitos, and even ladies who have inspired the fancies of the good dames of Varzin with deep-seated ideas of the romantic and mysterious.

When Bismarck was cornered by a visitor who somehow or other had managed to force past the sentry, he disappeared by a subterranean stair, leading to a cellar in all probability. One day when Herr Busch arrived at the Castle, he saw the Prince plunge down this staircase, and asked him if he were going to the dungeons!

"This stair," said Bismarck, "helps me to escape from unexpected visitors. When I heard your postillion's horn I prepared to make myself scarce, for I'd forgotten you were coming to-day—you have no idea of the life impudent people lead me. Some nondescript fellow sent me word one day that if I didn't receive him he'd hang himself—

THE OLD MAN OF THE SACHSENWALD.

I was wild; so I said, if he thought this painful end unavoidable I'd send him a fine strong rope—the newest I had got!—but that he shouldn't be allowed to see me. And of course the hanging didn't come off."

The Prince has another way of getting rid of inconvenient visitors, and if it isn't true, still we owe it a good anecdote.

A foreign Ambassador had been having a long conference with the Chancellor, when he had the idea, during a pause in their conversation, to ask the Prince how he got rid of bores.

"Oh, that's easy," said Bismarck. "When my wife thinks somebody has been too long with me she sends for me on some urgent pretext, and the bore is obliged to go."

As he spoke the words a servant entered and asked his master to be good enough to spare a few minutes to the Princess!

The Ambassador went a fiery red, and Bismarck himself must have been a little put about by the irony of the coincidence. However, the interview ended immediately in the departure of the Ambassador.

Meanwhile, what is Bismarck's idea about his own powers of activity?

The following story, told by one of the guests at Varzin or Friedrichsruh—no matter which—will tell us. One day when he was at table a telegram from Berlin was handed to the Prince, who rose and asked his guests to excuse him, as the telegram required an immediate answer.

"For, you see," he said, "that was a telegram from my son Herbert, and unless I reply he'll send me a second, and then a third; he won't leave me in peace until I have answered him. For Herbert is without pity; he recognises nothing but duty, and won't admit me to escape her laws. If I'd been as diligent in my youth as my *filius* is, I'd have proved a very different man than I am!"

In spite of all his great qualities, Bismarck has been very severely judged by his colleagues in diplomacy. This is what the late Baron de Northumb says of him. He was Belgian Ambassador at Berlin, and wrote in 1877, at the time when the Eastern Question was again rising on the horizon of international politics.

"As to the *rôle* Bismarck will play in this question, all one can say is, that he is dominated by the fear of a Franco-Russian alliance. . . . If he had a lofty spirit or a generous soul, one might hazard a guess at his policy, but the Chancellor is not guided by the interests of humanity, nor even by those of Europe. Politics with him is a question of material dynamics. He despises men, and has only two aims—to consolidate the grandeur of Germany and the grandeur of himself—the great work of his life. . . . He says he is profoundly unhappy, and he is. He has lost all balance. He has just been pretending that he wanted to give up his power, but he couldn't live without it and without the public admiration—as he shows by the attention he pays to the press. The slightest attack puts him in a fury. I look in vain for his fellow in all history. You can't judge the man without taking into account his temperament, such as it has been made by his unprecedented success. His power has become a kind of ministerial Cæsarism. . . . Is he as low, physically speaking, as he makes believe? Many question if he is. He'd be much better if he'd be content to regulate his time and his work better, and exercised more control over himself. He goes to bed at four in the morning, falls asleep at seven, and rises after mid-day. By then his business has become piled up; he approaches it with disgust and even with anger."

The picture is perhaps a little black in outline; but at the time when Baron de Northumb was writing, Bismarck himself had begun to doubt his work and fell at times into

fits of unspeakable melancholy. His historian, Herr Busch, shows us this state of mind in the following touching lines, which we translate here without comment:

"It was at Varzin, in 1877: the dusk was drawing in, and the Prince was sitting, as usual after dinner, beside

TO BISMARCK, FROM THE STUDENTS OF GERMANY.

the fire-place in the great drawing-room, where is Rauch's statue Victory Distributing Her Wreaths. After a long silence, during which he had been flinging pine cones every now and again into the fire, he suddenly broke out with the complaint that his political labour had won him very little satisfaction, and still fewer friends. Nobody was grateful to

him for what he had done. His work hadn't been the cause of happiness to him, or to his family, or to anybody else.

"One of those who were present replied that he had at least secured the happiness of a great nation. He shook his head sadly, and said—

"'Yes, but at the misery of how many people? But for me three great wars would never have taken place, eighty thousand men would not have perished, fathers, mothers, sisters, and wives would not have been plunged in mourning. . . . *I have to settle with my God for that*, but I have reaped but little joy from my achievements: nothing but trouble, disquiet, and chagrin.' He went on in the same way for a while longer, his auditors sitting silent and surprised, for they had never heard him speak like this before; and while Rauch's Victory seemed to be flinging garlands on the old man, we thought of Hamlet's famous monologue—

> "'How weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable
> Seem to me all the uses of this world.
> Fie on't! ah, fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
> That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
> Possess it merely.'

"Since that time," says Herr Busch, "the Chancellor has often expressed himself in almost identical terms."

CHAPTER XV

NOTES ON HIS COUNTERFEIT PRESENTMENTS

Mr. John Grand-Carteret has published a very complete and attractive work about Bismarck, in caricature. There one finds, ingeniously classified and commented on, most of the fantasies inspired in the draughtsmen of the world by the ways and doings of the giant of German politics.

My own task is a much more modest one, for the simple reason that caricaturists have rarely attacked Bismarck's private life, offering as it does so little to that fantastic raillery which must appear in every satirical cartoon. Even trade has chiefly exploited the political Bismarck. The heads of Bismarck on nut-crackers, ink-pots, paper-weights, Swiss carvings,—are generally those of a helmeted ogre, recalling in no way the handsome features of the old hermit of the Sachsenwald. And so with the pipe-heads, which are usually those of the martial Bismarck, reproducing the stern look of the Soldier-Diplomatist.

True, most of these articles date from the time when Bismarck was still the leader of Germany. But, so late as 1894, there was to be seen advertised in the German papers a liqueur called "German Unity," presented to the public beneath the auspices of a patriotic illustration showing the everlasting Colonel of Cuirassiers giving his arm to the Emperor William II.

Our readers, who know Bismarck's weakness for a uniform, can imagine that he has been far from displeased at the consecration by art of his military appearance.

It did not matter to him that it was shown in forms of even grotesque caricature. It helped his popularity, and that was enough for him.

The man who has been more caricatured than any other of the century, except Napoleon III. and the Sultan, has never shown the slightest resentment against the comic

LABEL OF *GERMAN UNITY* LIQUEUR.

artist, and perhaps we can see in that the secret sympathy of the humorist with every form of humour.

Shortly after the death of Napoleon III., the Sultan informed the European cabinets that he was highly displeased with the persistent way in which caricaturists made "a Turk's head" of him. Perhaps he expressed himself a little more diplomatically, but these are the almost

identical terms used by Bismarck afterwards to convey to his familiar friends the thought of the Commander of the Faithful. He added—

"Now that Napoleon's dead and the Sultan's slinking from sight, I'm going to be left as the sole prey of these gentlemen."

And then, afraid of being misunderstood, he added—

"Not that it annoys me. On the contrary, my only thought is—am I able to give them copy enough?"

IN BISMARCK'S FACE! (AN UNPUBLISHED CARTOON BY MOLOCH).

With reference to the psychological *leit motiv*, the theory of which I set out in my preface to this book, and which appears in most of the chapters in accordance with the right Wagnerian motto, I ought to give the position of honour here to a caricature of Moloch, conceived in the spirit of Lavater, and showing the unexpected images that lurk in the more striking features of the human face, when they are gradually changed and changed.

You see that, by applying this method to Bismarck's face, the draughtsman gets an acrobat out of it, balanced on his two hands, his head on the ground and his heels in the air. An acrobat, a rope-walker, a clown, if you like, and, in consequence, a humorist; for between the clown and the humorist there is but a single step, a step which Bismarck would take for a word at any time in his career.

I have introduced this caricature earlier than I

THE NEW PETER THE HERMIT (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1849)

should, because it connects with my theory. I now go back several years.

The earliest caricatures relative to his private life are to be found in *Kladderadatsch*, in 1872. Before this date the comic papers show us hardly anything but terrible Bismarcks, in the shape of lions, or cats sleeping while the mice play, or Titans forging the thunderbolts of war, tamers, mechanicians, pilots, equilibrists etc., etc.

Indeed, *Kladderadatsch* must be considered the originator of Bismarckian caricature. Strange coincidence —

BISMARCK TEARING UP THE PRUSSIAN CONSTITUTION
(*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1862).

the nomination of the deputy as a delegate to the Diet of Frankfort, that is to say, the launching of our humorist on his political career, was saluted by two of the most

admirable puns of which German journalism can boast. Unfortunately the two puns are untranslatable.

Another strange coincidence is the following: The first large caricature of *Kladderadatsch* where Bismarck figures, in 1849, represents the Iron Chancellor of the future (at that time he probably never dreamed of winning such a title) as a mail-clad Crusader. But this doughty warrior of the Cross, who carries his genealogical tree in one hand and a birch in the other, offers at the same time a cunning allusion to his reactionary ideas in the silhouette of a lobster,

FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE THREE HAIRS (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1862).

both by the antennæ springing from his helmet and the cotyledonous tail falling to his heels. As a whole, the picture is a burlesque directed against the imitators of the *Gazette of the Cross*, which was founded by the feudalist nobles to counteract the revolutionary movements of the time, and secure the triumph of absolutism and divine right.

Let us notice, too, this detail which is really of importance in the study of Bismarckian caricature. Till 1862, Bismarck is represented with a full beard and a fine

head of hair, but the latter rapidly thinned and was soon replaced in *Kladderadatsch* by the peak of a helmet. On the 5th May 1862, Bismarck was appointed Ambassador, and began to go clean-shaven, whether he had proved by that time the need of accustoming himself to edged weapons, or whether the complete baldness of his short head gave him the idea of restoring symmetry to his facial appearance by shaving the hair of his chin and jaws as well.

In the following year appeared the three legendary hairs, of which *Kladderadatsch* was the original discoverer beyond all doubt. The Berlin journal claims the honour in some verses addressed to the Chancellor in 1880, with regard to a fine imposed on one of its cartoonists for an "offence to the Chancellor."

Here is the strophe in which occurs this claim—which settles one point in the pictorial history of Bismarck—

> "Who planted many a wreath on your brow,
> Sang many a song in your honour?—
> Why, the very man that you persecute now
> *Of your three pretty hairs was the donor.*"

In 1872 the *Kladderadatsch* is again the first to show us Bismarck as the countryman. Tyras is sleeping with his head on his master's knees, and the latter is crumbling bread for geese who are flapping their wings at his feet. The Châtelain of Varzin holds over his head at the same time an open umbrella, to protect himself against the heavy shower of letters and telegrams which are seen tumbling down on him.

In 1876 a "weather-gauge" cartoon shows us the Colonel of Cuirassiers alternating with the good countryman in a flap-hat, according as the weather is fine or the reverse. After a time the pipe and the bottle of hock began to be taken off, and they went the length at last of

caricaturing Bismarck at his parliamentary gatherings or as the forester of Friedrichsruh.

A vignette of Daelen represents the postman of Varzin entering the Castle. His carriage is crushed down beneath a load of packages, bundles, cases, and beer-barrels, sent to Bismarck from every corner of Germany.

He has also a Bismarck standing before a beer-cask, and swigging off his liquor at a single draught.

FAIR AND FOUL WEATHER (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1876).

In 1884, *Kladderadatsch* gave an intensely serious but most comic picture, in which the Prince appeared for the first time as patertamilias. Here was Bismarck searching the head of his son Herbert, for the first of three hereditary hairs! This legend contains, I must say once more, an error of fact, for already at that time there was no hair whatever on Bismarck's head, save in the traditions of caricaturists, and from these the famous three are never likely to depart, so necessary are they to the profession.

appearing now as cabalistic signs, now as horns, now as stings, and now as the rays of a nimbus! The top of the Prince's head is absolutely bald this many a year, although he has taken admirable precautions against baldness.

He had, they say, special theories about the falling of hair, theories based on the influence of the moon, and borrowed by the diplomatist from the forester latent within him. One day one of his counsellors had got his

BISMARCK DISCOVERS WITH PRIDE THAT HERBERT HAS GOT THE FIRST OF THE THREE HEREDITARY HAIRS (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1884).

hair cut, and Bismarck complimented him on his appearance, saying he had chosen the right time to have it done, namely, the time when the moon was waxing.

"For you see," he added, "it's just the same with hair as with trees. If you want the roots to survive, cut down in the first quarter: if you want them to die, cut down in the last. There are people, learned people especially, who don't believe it, but forestry follows the precept, though it pays no heed to the principle."

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

Be it deference to custom, habit, or tradition, as we said just now (and caricature is of necessity a close observer of physiognomic tradition, being forced to fix each characteristic as such-and-such, to stereotype each attitude,

THE NEW BARBAROSSA (*LUSTIGE BLÄTTER*).

each salient feature as so-and-so, —and such-and-such and so-and-so they remain henceforth among the comic attributes of the personage), at any rate the cartoonists continue to give the cranium of Bismarck the three

portent-boding hairs! Here is a design of the *Lustige Blatter* which shows them piercing the rocky cave, beneath which the new Barbarossa lies hidden.

The crows in the picture (birds of evil omen at which the doctor is looking) are sufficiently recognisable for Caprivi and Bötticher: the head of Schwenninger peeping out of the skylight is the best likeness of them all.

A LESSON IN DIPLOMACY (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1888).

But we have not yet reached the date of his dismissal, a time which was naturally marked by a recrudescence of political caricature, quite free from the malice of former days—as was fitting in the case of an old man who was supposed to be on the eve of a complete disgrace.

The *Kladderadatsch* shows him for a last time in military coat and cap, giving a lesson in diplomacy to his

son Herbert, and the scene seems to be taking place, for no reason that I can discover, in a cellar in the midst of a heap of folios.

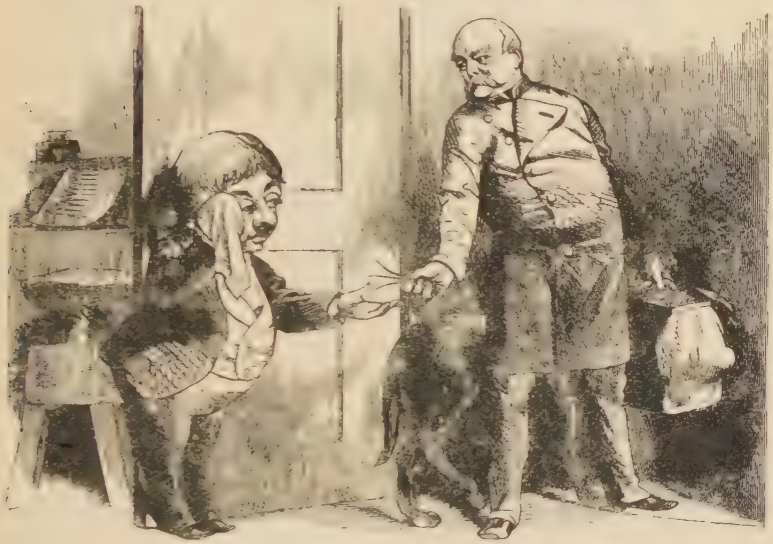
But already at that time we see on the following page of the *Bismarck Album*, Richter and another leader of the Opposition beginning to draw off his boots.

Other phenomena, all heralding the threatened fall, are

PEACEABLE HEADS AT LAST (*KLADDERADATSCH*, 1889).

shown us by the pencil of *Kladderadatsch's* artists. In one case we have a partial eclipse of the lunar Bismarck, announced by the telescopes of the principal German papers; the face of the shadow obscuring the round well-known head, surmounted by the three heraldic hairs, is that of General Count von Waldersee, the Chancellor's great rival.

Another fantasy of the same epoch which attains remarkable perfection, and is more than a mere caricature, is that of Bismarck in his woodman's dress (very like the Lenbach portrait), planted in the midst of a field on which are growing magnificent cabbage-heads. The scene is at Varzin, where the Chancellor has gone for a short holiday, and where, says the legend beneath the picture, he must



KLADDERADATSCH SHEDS THE BIG TEAR.

be happy to see once in his life, heads that are neither those of opponents nor sectaries.

At last comes the hour of dismissal, and the caricatures become philosophic in tone. Germany, mordant enough a few years before, relates the story of his abdication in the homeliest fashion in the world, and with a pungent *comic* emotion which is very amusing. The little dwarf of the *Kladderadatsch* wipes his eyes with one hand and holds the other out to Bismarck—the latter in civil attire with his

bag in his hand—who deposits in the other's palm the three hairs, for he has just given up all the insignia of office and wishes now to owe nothing to anyone!

In France the allegorical drawings saluting his departure are more sombre in tone. A composition of Willette shows us the Chancellor in full military dress, with a suit of mail, and a halbert in his hand. His dog is lying at his feet. Both are watching at the entrance to a strange park full of cannons and howitzers, and Bismarck hurls these proud words at Death passing in—"Despite the deadly cold, I always guard this company. . . . Death, pass upon your way!"

A little less gloomy are The Four Seasons of a Statesman, by J. Blass; but not less bitter in significance. Republican France (for the woman wears the Phrygian cap of Liberty) plays with a jumping jack with the features of Bismarck and the three hairs. She holds him by one of the hairs in one hand, and with the other hand draws the string that makes him dance. The legs fall at the end of the first season, then the arms, and lastly, when winter comes, there is nothing left but the head. The allusion, unfortunately, is not very plain, at least to my apprehension.

Italian caricature is quite Platonical. The *Pasquino* simply shows us the Chancellor removing his show of marionettes.

Punch, which is always somewhat grave and sometimes even tragic in its political pictures, published, on the 19th of March 1890, a very fine cartoon called Dropping the Pilot (by Sir John Tenniel). The pilot is coming down the little ladder at the side of an ironclad, from the top of which the Emperor William is looking down at him sadly. *Judy* represents the Chancellor shutting his shop beneath the eye of Gladstone, who seems concerned, while *Moonshine* has the same two characters

"turned out" in a heavy rain, which their dog-like bodies bravely endure. Bismarck is naturally enough in the shape of a mastiff, while Gladstone is a griffin, and both heads have a sombre look of melancholy and resignation, with a touch of ferocity in the former.

DROPPING THE PILOT (BY SIR JOHN TENNIEL).

In Switzerland humour is uppermost. The Helvetian Bismarck usually appears on the top of a mountain, and is occupied in contemplating the diverse countries that make smart once more the wounds of a disappointed politician (*Nebelspalter*, 15th June 1889). At the last turning he is still carrying his favourite son Herbert and leading the other by the hand, but his strength fails him, the giant sinks down, and he ends by being carried to the grave on four needle-guns (*Carillon*, Geneva).

Other foreign cartoons are gay, pleasant, and courteous, and may be classed as belonging to impartial political caricature.

But a few years pass, and the German cartoonists become harder on their great man. The *Lustige Blatter* in particular takes a most aggressive tone. In 1893 appeared a coloured cartoon, with eight designs opposite each other in four pairs, comparing the Bismarck of yore with the Bismarck of to-day. Certainly the language of the latter (for he contents himself with speaking nowadays) is the very opposite of the conduct formerly charged against him; and the whole makes a very successful skit on the chameleon-like Bismarck known to his readers.

First we have the Cuirassier-Diplomatist of 1866, shoving into the great sack, which is Prussia, all the small States ripe for absorption—Schleswig, Hanover, Frankfort, etc. Opposite is the hermit of Friedrichsruh, in dressing-gown and slippers, drinking with the delegates from Lippe to the long life of the small States. Next comes a Bismarck as Jupiter Tonans, smiting all who resist him, notably von Arnim. Opposite is the same man, in the guise of an old granny, telling her goosis the lamentable tale that "Once upon a time—which they call the golden age—there was not the slightest danger in belonging to the Opposition."

Bismarck, in the third pair, figures first as father of the official press, turning the crank of an automatic Pandin to make him spit out another leader, and next as an old man in a dressing-gown, pointing to Caprivi's portrait, and telling his son Herbert—"Look you, little Herbert, if ever you become Chancellor, don't be like this man, who maintains himself in power by very doubtful manœuvres, and chiefly by influencing the press."

Finally, we see Bismarck as tamer of wild beasts, pouring out gold coins to the boa-constrictor of bureaucracy, while opposite we see him, as hunter of the woods, aiming an arrow to slay the monstrous glutton.

The projects for a definitive monument to the memory

THEN . . . AND . . . NOW.

of Bismarck, submitted by the same journal in 1893, are scarcely more respectful towards the idol of the German nation.

"As you can't give him an equestrian statue," ran the legend, "that kind of monument being reserved for members of reigning houses, and as, on the other hand,

BISMARCK THE PRODIGAL SON.

the great man on foot won't be imposing enough, we take the liberty of submitting to our contemporaries the projects on the opposite page."

First was a horseless carriage, in the midst of which sat Bismarck fronting his dog. The pedestal of the carriage was a huge triumphal arch. Next came a Bismarck perched on a huge bicycle; a Bismarck mounted on his

dog Tyras; a Bismarck astride a headless wooden horse (the "sheep-block" of the gymnasiums); and, again, the horse figures in the final proposal, but Bismarck stands at the side of it.

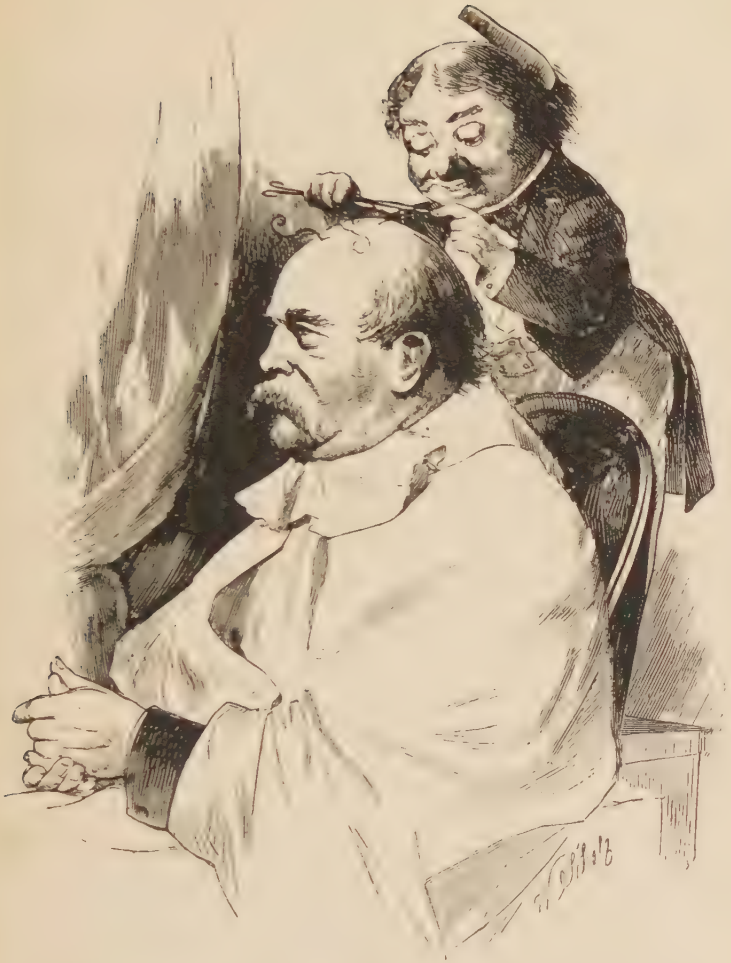
The Socialistic comic paper, *Truthful James*, is almost as hard on the great man. Under the heading of "The Prodigal Son," it shows us a country Bismarck, herding a drove of swine, each of which bears the name of a journal devoted to his cause.

In 1894 the tone of the *Lustige Blätter* becomes milder. In a large coloured engraving it shows us the ex-Chancellor draped in the cloak of Moses. The angel of Germany stands by his side. He points with his finger to the new palace of the Reichstag and says, "Behold the Promised Land to which you have led your people: but there thyself shalt not enter!"

And now we are on the eve of the great reconciliation, and the *Lustige Blätter* begins to change its tone. The grand event is referred to in a page of epic design, where the two champions appear as Achilles and Agamemnon. And Achilles speaks to Agamemnon in the language of Homer, saying he has "quelled his wrath, since sullen and undying hate beseems not the lofty soul." They end by shaking hands, amid the plaudits of the people.

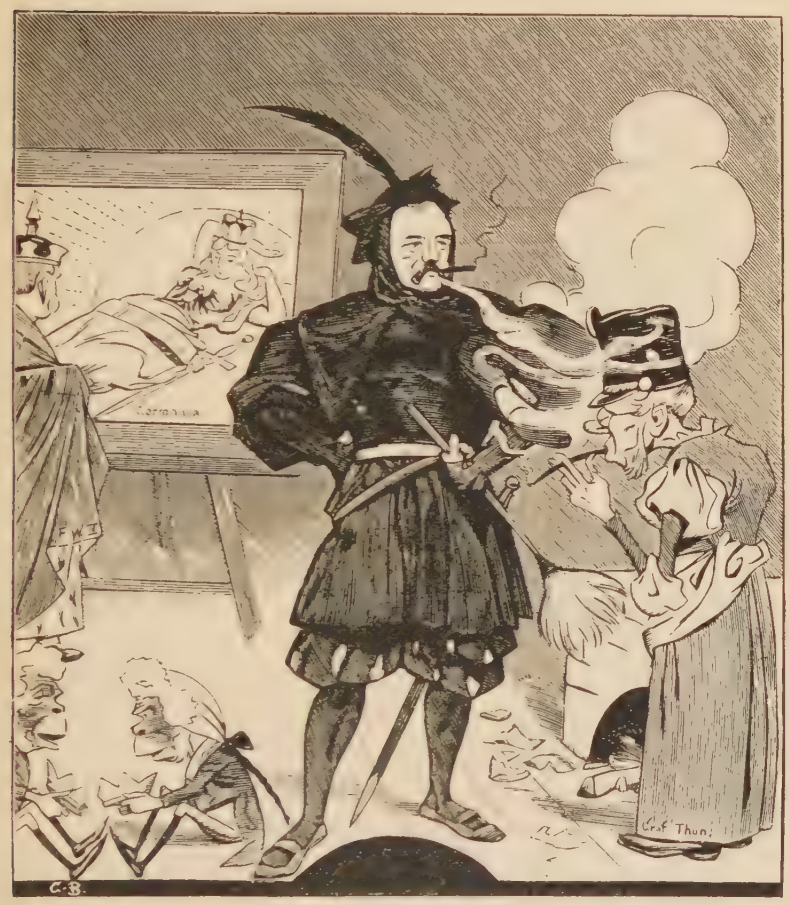
Other sketches, all of them quite as kindly, illustrate the events of the memorable week (*Bismarck's Woche*). The caricaturist of the *Lustige Blätter* invents extracts from illustrious papers—that have no existence. In the *Ottoman* it gives a picture of Bismarck as a medico, with this glorification below it: "The Prince appeared in these evil times like a veritable worker of miracles, and the whole world applauded him, assured that he had the panacea capable of curing the whole world's ills."

In the hypothetical *Mécontent*, a Socialistic sheet, it is Bismarck as an imperial architect out of a job who is



UNWRITTEN HISTORY: SOUVENIRS OF YOUTH (*KLADDERADATSCH*).

ringing at Caprivi's door to ask if he can't get a bit of a start in the Chancellor line. Another supposed extract



HIS *DÉBUT* AT FRANKFORT IN '71, IN THE CHARACTER OF MEPHISTOPHELES.

from the *Vessel of State* shows Bismarck and Caprivi turning the steering-wheel time about, and people have an

idea, runs the legend, "that the old and new eras are coming together."

BISMARCK MAKES EVERYBODY BRUSH HIS BOOTS.

Lastly, the caricaturist of the *Lustige Blätter* gives a final extract from *The Vine*, the supposed organ of the wine-growing interest. The picture shows us Caprivi dropping tears into the bottle of *Steinberger-Kabinet* which the Emperor had sent to Bismarck, and the legend explains that the famous bottle, no doubt, contained some Lachryma-Caprivi of 1894!

At the present time of writing, the German caricaturists exchange their sharp tone for one of dithyramb, and the allegories inspired by the great Festival of 1895 (Bismarck's eightieth birthday) are simply hyperbolical in their eulogy.

The *Lustige Blätter*, late so mordant, shows us these three Chancellors in the order of their succession: Bismarck, a giant among dwarfs; Caprivi, with the dwarfs of yesterday as big as he himself is; and, lastly, Prince von Hohenlohe as a dwarf among giants, who are the dwarfs of yesterday.

The same idea will be used again by the same paper in

1897, but under another form. First, you have an outline represented by the gigantic silhouette of Bismarck, at the time when he was both Chancellor and President of Council. "To-day," runs the legend, "they have recourse to several to come up to this colossal model, but they leave gaps"; and the drawing shows Chancellor Caprivi and the new President of the Council, Bismarck's two successors, laid on the top of his silhouette, which is still bigger than they are.

THE MODERN GESSLER WISHES PEOPLE TO SALUTE HIS HELMET, BUT THE REICHSTAG WON'T DO IT.

On the occasion of Bismarck's eightieth birthday, the enthusiasm of the German caricaturist attained its height. The Socialistic comic papers alone darted their fires, *Truthful James* contenting itself by showing the god of German idolatry worshipped by the German monopolists. And the *Lustige Blätter*, as usual, set the mode by a special number, containing a large engraving in two pages, representing the apotheosis of Bismarck. It was a coloured picture in Gothic style, showing the Iron Chancellor preceded by two mediæval heralds, the shield of one of them bearing the device, "*In Trinitate Robur*"; that of the other, the famous saying, "We Germans fear God; other fear we have none."

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
NOTTINGHAM.

The first page of the same number is given over to a design that is very correct and very feeble, which shows at the least that German caricaturists gain nothing by leaving their own comic trade. Bismarck holds Germania in his arms, and she has sunk down on one knee, in order to

GREAT SUCCESS IN '70–'71 IN THE *RÔLE* OF SIEGFRIED.

offer him a splendid laurel wreath. And the inseparable companion of the Chancellor, his gigantic pipe, figures prominently, the only humorous item in the whole composition.

That, then, is the relation of Germany and Bismarck, from the point of view of the caricaturist.

The *Fliegende Blätter* adapts its tone to that of its

contemporary, and publishes another huge "apotheosis," which is not very clear in its significance.

The *Rire* of the same date gives a splendid thing of Jeannot's, instinct with patriotism; and in the following number reproductions from *Kladderadatsch* and some Austrian illustrated papers. The latter, as one can imagine, are much less lenient to Bismarck. The legends

BISMARCK AS TAILOR AND COBBLER.

below the pictures will save us the trouble of describing them.

Henceforth the iconographic era of Bismarck is at an end, especially of Bismarck in his more private life. That, as we have seen, was always respected by caricaturists, and at most they only ventured on a facetious allusion or two to his *rôle* as political tutor of Count Herbert. Those of our readers who have travelled in Germany, will be ab'e

to complete for themselves this short notice of ours; they will have admired the part played among the manufacturing classes of the country, especially those who manufacture smoking and drinking utensils — the part played among these by the majestic stomach and ogre-like face of Bismarck. And they will consult with advantage the book of Mr. John Grand-Carteret, which is one of the best furnished with regard to the portrayal of Bismarck the politician

CHAPTER XVI

THE melancholy confession that escaped from Bismarck in 1877 has nothing that can surprise the reader, now made familiar with the varying states of conscience in the man whose more personal and private life we have just been showing in its larger features.

Below a page in an album where Moltke had written—

"Lies pass, the Truth abides,"

Bismarck added the ironical comment, "I know well enough that truth will conquer in the other world, but meanwhile even a field-marshal wouldn't be any good against the lies of this one."

And that's about the wittiest testimony one could give to the weapons Bismarck has employed, although he boasts he has never lied! So far as words go, "truth" and "falsehood" are synonymous terms in diplomacy, since they change their meaning from one country to another. And that is why we may doubt the sincerity of his pessimism and his regret; why we may bethink ourselves, that the same man who lamented of late that his health and strength has been exhausted beneath the burden of his imperial task, also uttered this maxim of egoistic pride, in which he summed up his career—

"Fools pretend we never learn except at our own expense, but I have succeeded in learning at the expense of my neighbours."

'Tis we Frenchmen, alas! that have paid the bitter price of his experience. But we needn't be unjust. As

he grimly declared in the Reichstag that he didn't annex Alsace-Lorraine for the pleasure of the Alsace-Lorrainers, so it hasn't been to gratify his own mere personal interest that he has gone in for unifying Germany.

This unification, which constitutes his sole title to posterity, is his own personal achievement, but the original idea thereof is not Bismarck's. He borrowed it from the Liberals, and was content, when the proper moment came, simply to join it on to his favourite policy of repression and absolutism. "Germans," he said, "aren't worth anything till they are united by force or by hatred"; so he hastened to fan the flame of racial antagonisms, for the greater good of the Prussian monarchy. And that is why this monarchy will go under the day the Germans are left to follow their own impulse, and stop hating their neighbours.

The unity of Germany (I mean the unity of the German nation) will remain, indeed, because it is conformable to the laws of human evolution, which tend more and more to establish the ethnic unity of peoples and nations, to withdraw their fate from the whims of sovereigns and diplomats, even to bring to a common level international peculiarities and differences. The Bismarckian policy of unification succeeded because its object was in accordance with the laws of nature, although it rested on principles of authority that are now out of date and disappearing, as the social revolution that is coming in Germany will show to some purpose. From that point of view William II. is right, then, in following the "strong line taken by the 'dropped pilot'"; but this tardy turn of the wheel won't save either the useless Prussian hegemony, or the dynasty that secured it, from the shipwreck destined by history for the latest representatives of the right divine of kings.

In truth, whether Bismarck's successors wish it or otherwise, the logical development of Germany must be

BISMARCK (AFTER THE PAINTING BY LENBACH).

A KIND OF TARTUFFE, IN SHORT! BISMARCK AND NAPOLEON.

towards a federal republic, comprising all countries of German speech, among the rest Austria and part of Switzerland. This republic will spring from the fertile soil of German democracy on the day when the Social Democrats realise the supreme efforts put forth by the Feudalists on the one side and the Catholics on the other, in order to resist the enfranchisement of all mankind. That is how the matter will end, whatever Herr Otto Mittelstädt may say about the matter in his recent pamphlet, "Vor der Fluth."

Later, much later, when the superior principle of internationalism, repudiating the frontiers of language itself, and only allowing those of civilisation, shall have triumphed over the artificial principle of nationality, which is invoked to-day for or against peace by those who oppress all parties, then, perhaps, there will be only one European nation on which will be founded the supreme hypostatic groupings of the people.[1]

As for Bismarck's place in the esteem of posterity, I'm of opinion that it will be a small one, for he has been a man of will not soul, of reason not of art, of diplomatic movement and not of human impulse.

It would require a strange figure, indeed, to express the man's psychological quotient. By turns he is *paladin* and *baladin* (noble champion and merry-andrew)—two words which the Germans will never be able to distinguish, since they're always mixing up their p's and b's, but which differ as much all the same as the private Bismarck differs from the political. The only distinction Bismarck can make between the words is that of rhyme. And so in things physical as in things moral his giant figure has grown so big at the expense of his neighbours, by daring requisitions and bold annexations. Even his

[1] Internationalist groupings, that will succeed the political alliances of to-day.

domain of Friedrichsruh and his title of Duke of Lauenburg he borrowed from the Danes.

An eclecticism with regard to means naturally brings with it variability of conduct, illogicality, and inconsistency in reasoning. One day he has never been able to think the same as he did the day before. It is one of his principles that the fool is the man who never changes ("who is never changed" was the German Emperor's correction), and he glories in his power of adaptation as do others in their constancy.

"There's a crowd," he said once in the Reichstag, "who all their lives have only one idea, which they never call in question. I don't belong to it. I'm always learning. It is possible that in a year or a few years, if I still live, I shall look back on what I am defending now as a point of view I have abandoned."

This was but a re-statement of the profession of opportunism he made to Jules Favre the evening when the capitulation of Paris was signed.

"To be too logical in politics is often a fault; it even leads to folly and obstinacy. A man ought to know how to change with circumstances, to change with changing possibilities, to regulate his conduct according to the turn of events, and not his own personal opinion, which is often but a pre-conceived idea useless for the case in hand."

Illogical in things logical, stable amid instability, impassive and highly sceptical in all that concerns himself—such is the light in which throughout this book has been presented the humorist whose *formula* we gave in our preface.

This humorist might have been of interest to future generations, but he voluntarily sacrificed his vocation to his political career, the success of which has been too rapid and resonant to admit of *glory*, for in essence that is silent

BISMARCK AND HIS DOGS.

and slow of coming. Nowadays, indeed, noisy success is buried with its hero, and oblivion begins all the sooner for those who have worn out the heyday of their popularity.

It all ends in a fine funeral, a few pompous speeches, a calumnious newspaper report about the death. Then, as soon as the last taper is extinguished, as soon as the last shovelful of earth has fallen on the great one, there is a flight, a scattering, a rush towards the new idol of the hour.

A German paper tells how, one year in Prussia, a non-commissioned officer who was charged with the duty of looking after the instruction of the raw recruits, set all the conscripts the same question, namely, "Who is Bismarck?" Out of five-and-twenty men half a dozen didn't even know his name, or thought he had been dead ever so long, or fancied he was a French general! Such is glory nowadays. . . . All the same, Bismarck will have excellent "notices" in France the day on which he makes up his mind to quit this earthly scene. I could name one of the most widely circulated papers in Paris, which has been ready for two or three years with a copious Bismarckian necrology, filling two whole pages of the composing-slab, which had to be distributed and set up again when the printer was changed the other day.

Nevertheless, I repeat that I don't believe in the posthumous glory of Bismarck. He has been too great a man among his contemporaries.

They have raised him too many statues when alive for posterity to think of consecrating a durable monument to his fame. Besides, the hour is coming when we shall cease to rear monuments to anyone; when glory, so called, will be buried in the common grave of outworn superstitions, like all the other old myths that have been abolished by the modern scientific movement; when, during the short

time nature assigns to their passage upon earth, the living will have the courage to set themselves apart from the dead; when, in the relative eternity of universal life, "posterity" and "oblivion" will be words applicable to none.

THE END

PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB LIMITED, EDINBURGH

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
NOTTINGHAM.

The Times
(Book Club)
376-384 Oxford Street
LONDON.